

KIRIBATI COUNTRY PAPER
SECOND WORLD CONFERENCE ON DISASTER REDUCTION
18TH - 22TH JANUARY 2005
KOBE, JAPAN

Mr. Chairman

Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen.

Kiribati is honoured to be here today to share with the members of the UN family our interest and concern with all kinds of hazards, their possible disastrous impacts, the vulnerabilities of life and the need for humanity to be committed to a partnership in equality but build on the complementarity of relationships.

I would like to thank the host country Japan and its people for the warm hospitality and generosity extended to us not just today but over the years in the case of Kiribati.

The government of the people of Kiribati also extend to ISDR and to you the UN for this window of opportunity, to use a common phrase these days to "talk the walk, and hopefully to also walk the talk."

We are gathered here today in the shadow of the tsunami wave that shattered thousands, darkened the panorama of hope and woven a tapestry of despair. Kiribati shares with all countries present at this conference the deepest feeling of sympathy – the more so because we have been there.

Kiribati would also like to share with the people of Kobe the memories of words left unspoken and feelings left unexpressed for the tragic event 10 years ago. Their achievement since then instil in us a feeling of wonder and signifies that there is always hope because of the creativity in sharing and commitments.

