



REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE

World Conference On Disaster Reduction

Mozambique Statement

May we, first of all, express our deepest appreciation to UN/ISDR for their efforts and commitment in the organisation and promotion of this Conference for the revision of Strategies and Action Plan adopted in Yokohama in May 1994 towards a Safer World.

We extend, secondly, our thanks to the Government of Japan for their hospitality and warm welcome in this beautiful and historic city of Kobe.

For us, the timing of this Conference is an unparalleled reference bearing in mind the recent disaster provoked by the seaquake and the tsunami, occurred in the Southeast Asia and Africa, last December, leaving a trace of mourning and destruction of high proportions. We would like now to seize this opportunity to express our deep condolences and renew our solidarity with the People and Countries affected by this natural disaster.

In order to highlight further the importance of this Conference, we have the following: while the whole World and the international organisations are gathering their efforts in response to the effects of the tsunami disaster, other parts of the world are being affected by disasters, namely Europe and North and South America, with floods and landslides that provoke human victims and high material damages. This may well be the translation of the climate changes, whose mitigation calls for the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol whose requirements Mozambique has fulfilled as a vulnerable country located by the seaside.

This scenario calls our attention for us to consider as a core point disaster prevention and preparedness, which is one of the main objectives of this Conference. The experience of Mozambique, given its geographical location by the Indian Ocean and downstream the major part of the international river basins in the SADC region, shows that the vulnerability and the disaster risk reduction require a proactive approach translated into the anticipation, design and integration of disaster management policies and strategies in the long term developing plans.

We commend, once more, the organizers involved in the preparatory activities of this Conference, since we expect that this becomes a platform for strengthening a common vision of what should be our regional and international approach in the disaster risk reduction.

It is encouraging to witness since the tsunami disaster, initiatives and combined effort by many countries and international organisations towards the mitigation of the socioeconomic impact provoked by the disaster in two continents. This shows how the investment in disaster prevention means and adequate Early Warning Systems may become the best approach from the cost-benefit point of view, in comparison with the irrecoverable loss of human lives, apart from all the logistics necessary for a timely and integrated response.

The Mozambican experience shows that the Early Warning System component is only one part of the solution. Training and education as a disaster preparedness tool of the vulnerable communities for an effective reception of warning messages and timely adoption of adequate attitude, in same case is missing. On this regard, the development of human resources and promotion of insurance schemes assume a fundamental role in strengthening the resilience of the local communities to external shocks, reducing the poverty induced and aggravated by disasters.

It is our expectation that from these sad events we may learn some lessons that allow us an effective and systematic integration in the developing plans of programs of disaster risk reduction, towards the reduction of the negative socioeconomic impact. Obviously, this requires a coordination of initiatives and policies at national, regional and international levels in order to achieve global common goals.

The 2000 and 2001 floods in Mozambique highlighted the importance of this approach; therefore we consider of paramount importance the coordination at the SADC level of a platform leading to synergies mainly for a better management of both the shared river basins and the exchange of information on the Early Warning System on tropical cyclones.

For us in Mozambique, a coastal country prone and vulnerable to disasters, it is important to create and maintain a culture of international solidarity with the Peoples and Countries that fall victim of natural disasters as well as prevention and warning mechanisms at both regional and international levels all of them interlinked to benefit the different stakeholders. We there for support the China and Germany proposals for the establishment of regional early warning systems.

Kobe, 18-22 January 2005