

Statement of the Head of Delegation of Turkey
On behalf of Turkish Delegation; Mr. Sabri ERBAKAN, Under Secretary of
The Ministry of Public Works and Settlement

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honor to take the floor on behalf of The Turkish Delegation and I would like to express our nation's deepest condolences to the victims of the recent devastating tsunami disaster, which hit several nations in South Asia and caused huge amount of life loss and material damage.

Turkish people have faced several devastating natural disasters in recent decades and the most recent ones are still quite fresh in our memories. Turkey has already lost around 100.000 people in the last century in several earthquakes. Being a disaster prone country Turkey is giving great importance to the outcome of this world conference. There is no doubt that this World Conference is giving one more chance to human nature to be more prepared and well equipped for next decade in rushing to help and share the pain of the ones in need.

After the 1999 earthquakes, consequently, Turkey has reviewed and renewed her understanding of disaster management and reduction efforts in every aspect. In this review YOKOHOMA strategy was a key document. However, the recent experiences and further studies proved that disaster management and creating disaster resilient societies can only be achieved by strong institutional bodies, knowledge sharing, enhancing the educational and awareness capacity, risk reduction activities and more efforts on researches. Building a stronger and disaster resilient society is also a key element for a sustainable development. That is why, we believe that disaster prevention and preparedness efforts are always most crucial in creating disaster resilient communities and nations.

In this regard, Turkey attaches great importance to the Kobe Conference and its outcome in order to have a better vision for 2005-2015. Turkey always puts forwards the comprehension of disaster mitigation in a multi sectoral and multi disciplinary approach.

Mr. Chairman,

We believe that solidarity among nations should continue after the disasters as well. The presence of a group from Turkey, in the memorial ceremony for the Great Hanshin Earthquake on Monday underlines this solidarity. With the spirit of same solidarity, today we are doing our best to help the affected countries in South Asia by conducting relief aid operations with the support of the Turkish Nation.

Finally, we would like to extend our gratitude to the Japanese Government for their warm hospitality in organizing the World Conference here in Kobe.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.