**2019 Sixth Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction (GP2019)**

**13-17 May 2019 Geneva, Switzerland**

**Statement by Mr. J.J. Ratnasiri Secretary to the Ministry of Public Administration and Disaster Management, Sri Lanka**

Co-Chairs,

Hon. Ministers, Excellency’s, Distinguished Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honor and privilege for me to be here at this apex global platform which reviews progress made so far and successes achieved in the implementation of the Sendai Framework for DRR, adopted by UN Member States four years ago in Sendai, Japan. Over the last four years, tireless efforts at the national level and at global level have been taken to ensure that we move from the practice of managing disasters to managing disaster risk reduction.

The Government of Sri Lankawishes toexpress its appreciation to the UNDRR and the Government of Switzerland as Co-Chairsfor focusing on a timely and overarching theme for the GP 2019 Session - ‘ Resilience Dividend: Towards Sustainable and Inclusive Societies’. This brings into the forefront an important aspect of DRR, going beyond financial dividends. The three-day discussion will no doubt enable us to share experiences, understand challenges in fully linking up the Sendai Framework into our national polices and addressing it in the overall context of SDGs, the UN Urban Agenda and the Paris Climate Change Agreement as well.

Co-Chairs,

In understanding ‘resilience dividends’, we may need to look at short term monetary gains as well as the long-term socio-economic and environmental benefits in fostering growth and development, while simultaneously making considered efforts in reducing risks of disasters. In this respect, I am pleased to share with you what we have achieved in Sri Lanka in implementing the Sendai Framework. Fulfilling Goal E, National Strategies for disaster risk reduction have been formulated for the period of 2019-2030, National Emergency Operation Plan and the national policy on disaster risk management has been revised in line with the SFDRR, ensuring risk-informed implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Following are some specific concrete measures we have taken locally, to ensure that DRR and management thereof receive priority in all areas of development planning and investments;

* The Disaster Management Centre (DMC) is working collaboratively with the other stakeholder organizations to mainstream Disaster risk reduction and the development. DMC has initiated a project to introduce practical guidelines for 10 major sectors illustrating DRR mainstreaming based on Sendai Priorities.
* The Ministry of Public Administration and Disaster Management has introduced an insurance scheme against natural disasters for all houses, Small and Medium Scale Entrepreneurs (SMEs) through National Insurance Trust Fund, which is governed by the Government of Sri Lanka.
* The National Building Research Organization and Institute of Construction Training and Development are working in collaboration with other technical intuitions to introduce National Building codes for disaster-resilient construction.
* to mainstream Disaster risk reduction and development sectors
* National and local level programmes on Mainstreaming DRR into the education sector have been initiated with the support of the Ministry of Education, to ensure school safety comprehensively. Almost all the universities have taken steps to include disaster management modules into their curricula and three leading post graduate institutions managed by the national universities are conducting M.Sc. and postgraduate diplomas in Disaster Risk Management.
* A Muti-Hazard Risk index has been completed by the Government, addressing major disasters in the country, which enables the communities to understand their risks.
* Risk Based resettlement programme is going on to resettle 15, 000 families who are highly vulnerable to landslide in the up country of Sri Lanka investing for the housing construction and infrastructure development in the resettle areas.

Further, the Government has ensured that all these measures are implemented in an inclusive manner and that risk-informed development takes place in collaboration with the sector agencies and development partners, particularly the private sector.

**Excellency’s, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

We recognize the importance of risk-sensitive economic planning and establishing coherence between climate and DRR policies to better achieve SDGs. In this context, Sri Lanka works on establishing an ‘online damage and loss assessment system’ for all sectors, in light of the Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage and other standards, ensuring the collaboration of the National Planning Department and sector agencies under the support extended by GFDRR.

The Government of Sri Lanka, with the Financial support of Green Climate Fund and technical assistance of the UNDP Sri Lanka, is implementing the Climate-Resilient Integrated Water Management Project to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable smallholder farmers in the Dry Zone of Sri Lanka; particularly women, who are facing increasing and disproportionate risks of rising temperatures, erratic rainfall, and extreme weather events attributable to climate change.

The Government has taken initiatives to ensure Sustainable urban life, ensuring economic and spiritual wellbeing of the people and decent living in harmony with nature which has been one of the key objectives of the Mega polis and Western Province evelopment Ministry.

The Climate Resilience Improvement Project (CRIP), implemented under the Ministry of Irrigation and Water Resources Management, with the financial facility of the World Bank, is mainly focused on establishing a process that would build a more climatic-resilient economy, since the current understanding of multispectral impacts of climate and flood & drought modeling and scenario analysis are not adequate. In addition, project support to implement urgent climate mitigation investments are required to ensure the short-term integrity of flood control and irrigation infrastructure, transport network and critical education facilities at risk.

**Excellency’s, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Given the cross cutting nature of Disaster Risk Management , like many developing countries, we too face a fair share of challenges in Sri Lanka particularly in the areas of proportionate disaster management planning between top-down and bottom-up approaches. We could wish for more in coordination through the entire disaster management cycle and for enhanced focus on the disaster emergency response stage. Better emphasis in planning of a long-term recovery (post-disaster) process, would help enhance community and stakeholder resilience.

Further, challenges in physical and human resources mobilization are not a new phenomenon, and greater efforts are required in better knowledge management, information sharing, and establishing coordination and coherence among the relevant institutions and programmes.

In responding to these perennial challenges, we have planned several initiatives to ensure disaster resilience in the country in collaboration with the international communities. We urge for increased global cooperation with respect to sharing technology and funding support through partnerships, to address climate-induced losses and damage in order to provide better leverage for national resources and efforts towards sustainable Development which can empower communities.

**Excellency’s, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Additional to the natural disasters, we have also been victims of repeated cycles of complex man-made emergencies such as last month’s Easter-Sunday brutal terrorist attack that has shocked and devastated my country,, re-orienting its immediate priorities drastically. Nevertheless, in the coming weeks and months, we expect to bounce back to normalcy with renewed vigor. We believe that it is high time for us to collectively commit and be determined to make this planet peaceful and safe for all human beings and the generations to come, by ensuring resilience to all forms and manifestations of disasters and emergencies.

I thank you.