**SPEECH BY THE MINISTER FOR THE INTERIOR AT THE GLOBAL PLATFORM ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION**

**22nd- 26TH MAY, 2017, IN CANCUN MEXICO.**

**PROTOCOLS**

**Mr. Chairman….**

1. I am honored to be part of this fifth Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.
2. Disasters are visiting untold suffering on people. The June 3 flood and fire disaster (twin disaster),a combination that are polar concepts, which hit Ghana a year ago and claimed over hundred lives, is a bitter experience we will hardly forget. I believe all of us gathered here have one or more bitter experiences to recall.
3. Mr. Chairman, Disaster Risk is therefore a matter of global concern. However, among the less developed countries, inability to implement risk reduction measures fully is summed up in one word- POVERTY.
4. We are of the view that poverty has been the main cause of vulnerability in many parts of the world. This being the case implies that disaster risk management in less developed countries would not be meaningful if the core issue of poverty is not leveraged for a more considered attention at this forum.
5. Even though the first guiding principle of the SFDRR states that “each state has the primary responsibility to prevent and reduce disaster risk”, the fact that disaster risk is a shared responsibility cannot be overemphasized. Strong regional and international partnership is necessary to reduce disaster risk in the world, especially looking at the differential abilities of countries across the world to cope with disasters.
6. Mr. Chairman, we believe that this situation calls for a critical look at DRR funding within the context of national and international responsibility vis a vis abilities. DRR funding should be seen as a responsibility beyond the domain of individual countries. The fact that a disaster affecting one country could generate socio-economic implications for others, makes looking at risk from the shared approach a step in the right direction.
7. We need pragmatic action on the part of governments to mainstream DRR and ensure that DRR policies are implemented. We have to direct our commitment beyond individual national boundaries. Ghana, in this direction, has offered DRR training for 17 West African states in the area of early warning and response. It is also worth noting that Ghana has demonstrated commitment by establishing a national disaster fund which is backed by legislation.
8. This is facilitating the implementation of the SFDRR. We have mainstreamed the Sendai Framework for DRR and the SDGs into our overall national development framework. We have also set the stage to develop a national plan of action to implement the SFDRR. Government has come up with policies to tackle the core issue of poverty. For example the government has come up with a programme dubbed “planting for food and jobs” to improve income levels and reduce vulnerability. Again, reengineering of drains in our major cities is being considered in very high political circles.
9. Indeed, dealing with Disaster risk requires pragmatic approach with robust national agenda to drive home the global targets and goals. The Global platform should institute peer review mechanisms on the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. In such a peer review, investments in DRR should be scored or ranked high as a measure of development. This will require developing the appropriate indicators in that direction.
10. Mr. Chairman, the time to act is now. For posterity will not forgive us if we continue to make our globe a land and not a home, a burning furnace of hopelessness, rather than a haven of refreshment. Let us work harder than ever to make our globe resilient and safe.

Thank You.