

**Government of Malawi**

**STATEMENT BY THE**

**SECRETARY TO THE VICE PRESIDENT AND COMMISSIONER FOR DISASTER MANAGEMENT AFFAIRS, MR CLEMENT W.S. CHINTHU PHIRI**

**AT THE**

**2017 GLOBAL PLATFORM FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION MEETING IN CANCUN, MEXICO**

**22ND TO 26TH MAY, 2017**

The Chairperson;

Your Excellencies;

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.

Malawi, like most countries in the world, experiences different types of disasters. Common disasters include droughts, floods, stormy rains, hailstorms, disease outbreaks and earthquakes. These lead to loss of lives and damage to property, infrastructure and people’s livelihoods. For instance, in 2015, Malawi experienced floods which were the worst in living memory. A total of 106 people lost their lives, 172 were reported missing and 230,000 households were displaced in 15 of the 28 districts of the country. A total of 1.1 million people were affected. A post disaster needs assessment which was undertaken estimated that damage and losses were at **US$335 million** while the cost of recovery and reconstruction needs was estimated at **US$494 million.** In 2016, El Nino-induced drought affected 6.7 million people in the country.

Mr Chairman,

Let me reiterate that Malawi is fully committed to the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and has since started the process of domesticating the framework. So far, we have developed an action plan which stipulates how we intend to implement the framework. After this Global Platform, we plan to validate the action plan and develop national targets. Nonetheless, I would like to report on progress we have made as follows:

1. In order to **understand disaster risks**, Malawi is currently developing community maps that show areas at risk of floods and other disasters which are useful for planning and implementation of preparedness, risk reduction, response and recovery interventions. So far, we have produced maps for seven out of 28 districts in the country. Our intention is to cover the whole country. We have also developed a Disaster risk management (DRM) sourcebook for primary school and a process is underway to develop one for secondary school.
2. As a way of **strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risks**, Malawi has integrated DRM into selected sectoral plans and policies including district development plans at local level. Currently, review of the Disaster Preparedness and Relief Act (1991) is nearing completion to develop a DRM Bill. The National DRM Platform, a multi sectoral platform where all DRM stakeholders from national and local level meet to share knowledge, ideas and best practices in DRM was established in 2013 and is functional.
3. Malawi is also **investing in DRR for resilience** through an initiative called small grants scheme where local communities are provided with funds to implement small-scale community based disaster risk reduction interventions. So far, 20 communities have benefitted from the scheme and have utilised the funds to construct dykes to protect themselves from flooding, evacuation centres for providing shelter during displacement and rehabilitation of small scale irrigation schemes.
4. On **enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to build back better in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction**, Malawi conducts annual reviews of the national and district contingency plans in line with seasonal rainfall forecasts for a particular year. Community-based early warning systems are also being established and promoted in order to improve the dissemination and use of early warning information. Capacity has also been built in conducting post disaster needs assessments in order to build back better, and so far, two assessments have been undertaken - one for the 2015 floods and another for the 2016 drought. A National Disaster Recovery Framework has been developed to guide the implementation of recovery interventions in the country.

Mr Chairman, Your Excellencies, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, I thank you all for your attention.