

**MALAYSIA: Ministerial Statement by
Hon. Dato' Seri Dr. Wan Azizah Dr. Wan Ismail,
Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia**

First and foremost, allow me to congratulate the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) for convening the Asian Ministerial Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR) 2018, as well as the Government of Mongolia for hosting this event. The AMCDRR is now entering its Eighth (8th) edition, and this marks the first gathering after the launch of the Sendai Framework Monitor (SFM) as a tool to oversee the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) 2015-2030.

The impacts of climate change are increasingly felt worldwide and our country is no exception. In recent years, our exposure to a range of climate-related disasters such as floods, flash floods, landslides and strong winds has increased, partly due to climate change. Weather extremes are occurring more frequently and with higher intensities. Malaysia was never considered an earthquake-prone area. However, on 5 June 2015 we faced a 5.9 Richter scale magnitude tremor in Ranau, Sabah that took the lives of 18 mountain climbers on Mount Kinabalu and caused damage to infrastructures. The lesson learnt from all this events as well as the country's worst monsoon flood of 2014, has made the Government aware

that without commitment to disaster risk reduction (DRR), a fast developing nation like Malaysia risks losing its development gains to natural and man-made disasters.

In this regard, Malaysia has taken several initiatives to mainstream disaster risk reduction (DRR) into our development agenda, to safeguard future investment in the country. This is manifested by the substantial resources that have been provided to reduce underlying risk factors and promote sustainable development in the nation's primary development plan – the “Five Year Malaysia Plan”. In the 11th Malaysia Plan (covering the period of 2016-2020), flood mitigation efforts will be further improved, taking into account the intensity and frequency of extreme weather events, through the introduction of innovative solutions.

Disaster risk reduction will succeed with effective deployment of science and technology to support the decision making process. For this purpose, Malaysia has established a Scientific and Technical Panel on DRR to provide scientific guidance on disaster risk management for policy consideration, and provide timely evidence-based inputs to support the operational activities of the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction. Malaysia has also developed the National Science, Technology and Innovation Plan for DRR, to comprehensively and systematically address knowledge gaps on current and emerging hazards in the country, including taking an integrated approach to disaster risk

reduction and climate change adaptation, to ensure sustainable development. Implementation of the Plan, which is now awaiting endorsement by the Government, requires the commitment of multiple stakeholders.

Addressing the challenge of earthquake hazards is of primary importance in the country. The Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI) has promoted Malaysian Standards (MS). These Standards are intended for all future development in Malaysia to ensure that buildings are resistant to earthquakes and supported by National Earthquake Hazards Map to facilitate risk-informed investment in the country. As of now, these standards have been applied to earthquake prone areas in Sabah.

There are several ongoing national initiatives in Malaysia to advance disaster risk reduction at the local level. NADMA Malaysia is spearheading an effort to develop a national legal framework for disaster risk reduction, which would serve as the umbrella for state governments and local authorities in the country. In addition, NADMA has convened a series of national workshops to develop indicators that could be used to report the targets of both the Sendai Framework and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This effort has served to enhance coherence within national reporting systems and identified gaps in policies,

strategies and planning in the country, particularly with respect to the local level.

Many hazards associated with climate change have the greatest impacts in urban areas where most people and property are concentrated. The establishment of a multi-hazard platform is underway in Kuala Lumpur, to better manage and communicate risks for enhancing disaster resilience in the city. In this initiative, meteorological parameters (such as rainfall, temperature and wind speed) are downscaled to the city level for the first time ever in the region, to be used to assess the risk of flash floods, landslides, subsidence, strong winds, air pollution and urban heat. This pilot will result in the first ever city level multi-hazard forecasting system for the tropics. It will also provide the impetus for social innovation by facilitating the development of community level disaster resilience plans; inclusivity to empower special groups, including women and youth, to participate in disaster risk reduction. As well as giving attention in disaster relief planning to the welfare and needs for disabled persons, children, the elderly and women.

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Malaysia is of the view that no one country would be able to handle disaster effectively on its own. It needs friends to lend helping hands. In this respect, our Special Malaysia Disaster Assistance and Rescue Team (SMART) has been classified as the heavy urban search and rescue (USAR) team under the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group

(INSARAG) by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN-OCHA) and currently the second team classified in ASEAN Region after Singapore. Thus, Malaysia will be in the position to offer assistance to the affected countries in the region. Since 1997, SMART Team has been deployed to Sumatra and Kalimantan for Fire Fighting, Search and Rescue mission to Golchuk Earthquake in Turkey (1999), Gujarat Earthquake (2001), Tsunami in Aceh (2004), Nias and Pakistan Earthquake (2005), Landslide in Leyte, Philippines (2006); Padang Earthquake in Indonesia (2009), Typhoon Haiyan (2013), Rescue effort on MH17 in Kiev, Ukraine and Nepal Earthquake (2015).

At the regional level, Malaysia, as an active member of ASEAN and the current Chair of the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM). ACDM has pledged to continue its commitment in strengthening ASEAN mechanism in bringing together different sectors and stakeholders to ensure that the region is able to respond and meet the demands of responding to large-scale disasters through the “One ASEAN, One Response” initiatives. This was agreed by all ASEAN Member States during its 32nd ACDM Meeting held in Kuala Lumpur on 26 June 2018.

Malaysia looks forward to a fruitful outcome of this conference, especially the adoption of the “Ulaanbaatar Declaration” and “Action Plan 2018-2020 of the Asia Regional Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework”; to promote coherence and inclusiveness of local actions to

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prevent future disaster risk and ensure sustainable development, whilst effectively addressing new challenges brought about by climate change.

Thank you.