

ADDRESS BY U.ENKHTUVSHIN, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER OF MONGOLIA
AT THE 2ND ASIAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

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Ulaanbaatar

I would like to extend my warmest welcome to all of you Esteemed ministers, guests, representatives, ladies and gentlemen.

In times where the world's countries are transferring from rapid economic growth to sustainable development and from disaster response frameworks to disaster risk management frameworks, our priority should be laid, on basis of the initiatives and recommendations issued by the UN, on providing sustainable development through prevention of disasters and catastrophes thus reducing damages in regards to human lives, health, society and economy and to instantaneously eradicate harm caused.

I stress the importance for coherence between the goals and implementations of "The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction", "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", "Paris Agreement on Climate Change" and urge countries to use these documents as basis for their development policy and planning, and to improve coordination among sectors.

Therefore, the 2nd Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction is organized under the theme of "Preventing disaster risk: Protecting sustainable development" and the whole conference is directed at supporting and broadening regional cooperation.

Disasters and its resulting damages remain as the main factor of slowing the development growth worldwide. Disaster risk reduction and effective prevention are directly contingent on regional cooperation and countries' support.

The Asia Pacific region, especially the Northeast Asia is considered as the most susceptible sub-region of global disasters. This sub-region covers an area of 20.2 million square km and a population of more than 1.8 billion. Besides, 40% of all natural disasters occurred on the Asian continent and 88% of victims belonged in South and Northeast Asia.

Although Northeast Asian countries have strengthened economically, there is a need to eradicate potential disaster hazards, eliminate vulnerability and reduce disaster risks significantly. All incidents transpiring in the world are closely connected, and one of them is disaster risks caused by climate change triggered by global warming.

We have made a proposal on establishing a Northeast Asian disaster risk reduction platform in Mongolia and it has been discussed during the 4th and the 5th “Ulaanbaatar dialogue on Northeast Asian security” conference. I would like to ask for all of your kind support on this initiative.

Mongolia, as a country which has included specific ideas and supported the adoption of the “Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction”, has updated extensive legal frameworks in line with goals and objectives of the documents.

The State Great Hural has adopted the revision of the “Law on Disaster Protection” and the “Fire Safety Law”. With revision of these laws we provide the legal framework to prevent disaster risks, rescue, eradicate damages, organize swift and effective immediate reconstruction measures, improve participation of stakeholders in disaster risk reduction, increase private investment, reduce economic damages caused by disasters and so forth. For instance, the revised version of the “Law on Disaster Protection” includes now the provision that central and local governments should allocate 1% and private enterprises not less than 1.5% of their annual budget for disaster prevention activities.

Series of actions have been taken to establish management and coordinating mechanism for disaster risk reduction, to update and approve policy documents, rules and regulations. The Government of Mongolia has approved the national strategy to implement the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in 2017. The national strategy is being implemented on the basis of the partnership and collaboration between public and local organizations, scientific and civil society organizations, citizens, communities and international organizations.

Moreover, disaster risk management systems have been created and Disaster Risk Reduction National council (platform) and local sub-councils responsible for building and providing management and coordination across the country have been established. In addition, formation of a disaster risk management structure in the disaster management system has had a significant impact.

Following the socio-economic development, one of the key issues that countries should concentrate is to ensure disaster-resistance of cities and urban areas where majority of people live, to build a better-quality buildings, facilities and infrastructures, to promote public-private partnership and to increase investment. Mongolia is the first Asian country to support and integrate all aimag centers and cities into the “Disaster resilient, safe city” movement initiated by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction with aim to reduce disaster risk in urban areas and to achieve sustainable development.

Within the scope of proposals and recommendations from the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, and the experience exchanged with you, our focus is drawn on reducing the potential risk and ensuring the readiness for possible earthquake hazard. Today, the utmost concern of ours is the earthquake risk, as its' loss and consequences are the largest in the shortest period of time.

I myself, as Deputy Prime Minister, lead the permanent council responsible for providing integrated management and coordination of activities at national level to prevent from earthquake hazard, to reduce disaster risk, and to ensure the preparedness of citizens and the government. We have learned the general pattern of earthquake seismicity throughout the capital city and 12 aimags, updated the seismic mapping and built an "Earthquake disaster warning system" of the latest high technology in consistent with international standards to disseminate warnings to the public.

Furthermore, disaster protection training and methodological centers of international standard were built to provide knowledge and skills of self-rescuing and assisting others in case of earthquake and fire to residents, especially the youths and children, of Ulaanbaatar city, where more than half of the Mongolia population live. Such centers were also built in Darkhan and Erdenet cities.

Public engagement and local community collaboration are the biggest forces and impulse for disaster risk reduction. Particularly, it is important to intensify community-based disaster protection activities, to educate the public about the disaster and risk through various education institutions, and to train citizens to self-rescue and protect others.

We are working with an objective to upgrade the capacity of all urban centers with no emergency branch offices by forming voluntary partnerships and communities by 2020.

It is a great pleasure to highlight here that this is the outcome of our creative initiatives, experiences and information exchanges, and our collaborative effort to achieve the goal to reduce the disaster risk.

The Government of Mongolia is committed to take step-by-step actions to upgrade the legal environment and its disaster risk system. For instance, with the development of the assessment and management of disaster risk, we aim to reduce disaster risk, to strengthen the management and governance system of public-private and inter-sector collaboration, and to rationalize the financing mechanisms for disaster risk reduction.

There is also a need to develop disaster risk and vulnerability database, to improve the disaster prevention knowledge of the citizens, especially the young people, and to link the planning of the development policies with the risk assessment.

Thank you for your attention.

