

NZ Official Statement (AMCDRR 2018, Ulaan Baatar, Mongolia)

Risk-Sensitive Development for Community Resilience

New Zealand Context

In New Zealand we face a variety of natural hazards, including earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, extreme wind and rain, drought, fire, floods and landslips. As a result of climate change, we expect more frequent and severe hydro-meteorological disasters in the future, and are planning accordingly.

In the last decade our second city, Christchurch has experienced earthquakes of magnitude 7.1 and 6.3, which caused US\$26 billion in damage (representing 20% of our GDP). Then a magnitude 7.8 earthquake and tsunami on the east coast of New Zealand's South Island caused US\$1.4 billion of damage to transport infrastructure and led to the demolition of several large buildings in our capital, Wellington.

National Perspective

Particular lessons we have drawn from recent disasters in New Zealand include: the need to build community resilience, the value of early recovery planning, the important role of the private sector in supporting response and recovery, as well as the fundamental importance and complexity of insurance.

A Ministerial Review into our emergency response effectiveness found that we need to further professionalize our workforce; improve our approach to communications and information sharing; and to build better relationships with indigenous groups and other communities, to enable greater resilience and seamless response.

Building partnerships for resilience has been a key theme for us during the past year, and we have used participatory approaches to improve our emergency management system. We recently held our national emergency management conference, entitled 'Partners for Resilience'. It addressed disaster risk reduction and resilience issues and initiatives in the context of the private sector, rural communities, indigenous groups, children and youth, local government, health services, and those disproportionately affected by disaster. The conference successfully engaged a broad cross-section of society.

We strongly endorse the Sendai Framework, and were the first country to submit our report for the Sendai Monitor. We have built Sendai principles into our new National Disaster Resilience Strategy, which includes an implementation roadmap for the next decade and emphasises the importance of effective partnerships across society.

Over coming months and years, we will continue to strengthen our relationships and partnerships for disaster risk reduction, as we respond to the Ministerial Review and implement our long-term National Disaster Resilience Strategy.

International Perspective

New Zealand is, and will remain, deeply committed to international collaboration around Disaster Risk Reduction, while maintaining an effective humanitarian response capability.

New Zealand sits on the edge of the Pacific which receives 60% of our official development assistance and the bulk of our humanitarian response efforts. In the Pacific, DRR and climate change adaptation are so closely aligned that we deal with them in an integrated manner. This approach is embodied in the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP), which came into effect last year, and we support its implementation via our engagement with the Pacific Resilience Partnership. The Pacific is now starting to confront the challenges of effective integration, which has a particular urgency given the existential threat to low lying atoll countries posed by sea level rise, deteriorating water security and the increasing frequency and severity of cyclones and storm surges.

We also have important trade and political relationships with Asia, where we have responded to disasters; built emergency supply warehouses; helped develop governance frameworks for disaster risk management; trained disaster risk reduction professionals and assessed dam safety. We especially value the role of the AHA Centre. We are grateful for support from the region during our Canterbury earthquake response, and are impressed by the region's growing capability in disaster risk reduction and humanitarian response. Disasters know no boundaries - we are all in it together, and it takes a collective effort to support affected communities. We look forward to strengthening our partnerships for disaster risk reduction.

Conclusion

New Zealand is committed to disaster risk management, and methodical in our approach to reduction, readiness, response and recovery. We also continually review and refine our approach. As enthusiastic early adopters, we embrace the Sendai Framework.

Like others, we are challenged by data collection demands of the Sendai Monitor, but are working hard to find pragmatic solutions to our reporting obligations. We will also use our experience to help developing countries and partners to meet their own reporting obligations.

We have a broad range of skills, technologies and experience that we are keen to share with others. However, we have also come here to listen to others and to learn from their experiences.

We have high expectations that this Conference will lead to greater collaboration and coordination among participants, which in turn should lead to practical, effective outcomes.

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July 2018