
Republic of Korea Ministerial Statement

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

I am Shim Bo Kyun, Vice Minister of the Interior and Safety, of the Republic of Korea.

I am very happy to be here today at the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction on behalf of the Republic of Korea. I would like to express my deep gratitude to the government of Mongolia and UNISDR for organizing this conference.

With “Building a safe society where people and life are most valued” as a top priority for disaster risk reduction, we have been making continuous efforts to amend the constitution to include the right to safety.

In addition, we have strived to build a proactive disaster response system that works on-site and implement policies to raise awareness in everyday life.

Also, we have been part of international efforts to implement the Sendai Framework adopted in 2015. At Global Platform for DRR and many other international conferences, the Korean government has strongly called on countries to implement the Sendai Framework.

In addition, the Korean government is working together with private players to develop Sendai Framework indicators.

Taking this opportunity today, I would like to share with you the Korean government's progress and achievements on the implementation of the Sendai Framework and the action plan for the Target E of the Framework.

[Progress and achievements in Implementing the Sendai Framework]

Let me first share Korea's progress in implementing the Sendai Framework.

First, we are pursuing diverse disaster management policies to identify disaster risks at hand.

We have made public the regional safety index every year so people can compare the safety level of each city and region.

This aims to improve accountability of local governments in regional safety and disaster management and to encourage healthy competition among local governments.

Also, we have taken Nationwide Safety Diagnosis every year since 2015 to identify and resolve potential safety risks. The diagnosis aims not only to identify and resolve safety risks, but also to address legal and regulatory weakness.

Second, we take full advantage of private sector's capacity through strong private-public partnerships.

With an aim to root out chronic safety ignorance in daily life, the ‘Safety Sheriff’ program has been operated to encourage whistleblowing, while national, local governments and private organizations have partnered to promote safety culture campaigns to eradicate 7 major safety problems, such as illegal parking.

The ‘Safety e-Report’ system enables citizens to report safety threats, while ‘Emergency Ready’ App provides real-time information on disaster events and safety guidelines.

Third, we allocate more budget to reduce disaster risks and minimize potential disaster damages.

More than 13.7 billion US dollars go to disaster reduction and safety management every year. The allocated budget is used to prevent and minimize damages caused by 42 types of disasters including storm, flood, earthquake, road traffic accidents and epidemics.

Since the Gyeongju earthquake in 2016 and the Pohang earthquake in 2017, we have realized the Korean peninsula is no longer safe from earthquakes, so we decided to expand budget for earthquake preparedness and response.

Fourth, it is important to strengthen disaster preparedness to achieve effective disaster response and recovery.

In Korea, a nationwide drill called “Safe Korea Exercise” is held every year in which 640 public and private organizations as well as citizens participate to strengthen disaster preparedness capacity.

We are seeking significant changes in disaster recovery as well. The government established a new scheme where a whole city is designated as ‘Special Recovery Area’ to apply a comprehensive recovery and restoration plan. Also, we are expanding the scope of the relief support to include psychological aid for disaster victims by establishing a trauma center and a disaster psychology help center.

[Plans for Action on Target E of the Sendai Framework]

The Korean government is doing utmost to implement the Target E of the Sendai Framework. Based on a 5-year national safety management plan, both national government and local governments develop their own annual implementation plans.

The Central Safety Management Committee chaired by the prime minister prepares strategies based on the plan.

The Korean government is willing to take more actions in the future so that our DRR efforts could deliver the core commitments of the Sendai Framework.

[Wrap-up]

Due to climate change and other factors, the world has become increasingly vulnerable to natural disasters. Such disasters do not only affect a single country.

Thus, international cooperation for DRR is all the more important.

To address such challenges, Korea will do its best to implement the Sendai Framework and to cooperate with Asian and international organizations.

Thank you.