



Economic Cooperation Organization

**"Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction"  
Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia  
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**Statement by  
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Secretary General of the  
Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO)**

**ECO Secretariat - Tehran**

**Honorable Ministers,**

**Excellencies;**

**Distinguished Participants;**

It is a distinct privilege for me to address this august Conference on behalf of Economic Cooperation Organization. At the outset, I would like to express my profound gratitude to the people and the Government of Mongolia for the warm hospitality and the excellent arrangements made for this important Conference in beautiful city of Ulaanbaatar. Let me express my congratulations to ~~Ms. Mami Mizutori, in her new assignment~~ followed by my best wishes for a total success. My gratitude also goes to <sup>the</sup> UNISDR, particularly to the Regional Office for Asia and Pacific for organizing this important event.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

ECO is an inter-governmental regional organization with more than 8 million square km territory and 440 million inhabitants in its 10 member states includes Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

ECO scope of activities now embraces a range of fields with direct and indirect impacts on the social and economic development of individual Member States and the ECO Region as a whole. Our priority areas are Trade, Transport ~~Transit~~, Energy and Tourism. Other areas of our activities include Industry, Agriculture and Food Security, Environment, Health, Drugs Control, and also Disaster Risk Reduction. ECO has always been positively responsive to and guided by the agenda of the international community and the United Nations.

## **Distinguished Participants;**

The ECO Region is one of the most disaster prone regions in the world stretching from central to south and to south-west Asia. The Region is located on a high-risk geological structure, topography and climactic characteristics and is exposed to a wide range of natural hazards such as floods, earthquakes, landslides, storms, droughts, glacial lake outburst flood (GLOFs), heat and cold waves, sea water intrusion, cyclones and avalanches that trigger various types of disasters, which cause human and economic losses. Statistics showed that between 2000-2017 about 353 natural disasters were reported and more than 80 million people have been affected. Every year during this period, ECO has incurred losses on an average of a staggering more than 2 billion US dollars due to natural disasters. Therefore, ECO finds itself standing in the face of increasing vulnerability to disasters in a changing climate. This compelled the ECO Member States to have more concentration on this global issue and explore a regional and collective response to these phenomenal risks which constantly claim their economic and human capitals.

Since 2005 and following the Hyogo Framework for Action, ECO, in line with global agenda started to establish intra-regional exchanges on ways and means to address natural disasters. A number of high level conferences were organized to provide policy makers and regional stakeholders with an opportunity to make commitments for necessary measures. In the same line, ECO Regional Center for Risk Management of Natural Disasters (ECO-RCRM), an ECO specialized agency, was created in Mashad, Iran. Some disaster-related projects and capacity building programmes have also been conducted by ECO addressing needs and requirements of different target topics and groups of the Member States.

## Ladies and Gentlemen;

The ECO vision for 2025 envisages, inter alia, coordinating and encouraging the ECO Member States, to undertake relevant activities on DRR. So far, ECO with financial support of Islamic Development Bank and technical support of UNESCAP have been able to draft ECO Regional Framework on DRR which is in line with the Sendai Framework ~~on DRR and in consonant with the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and other frameworks under the overall context of SDGs.~~ The draft Framework awaits the consideration and approval of the upcoming Ministerial Meeting to be hosted by Turkey in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 2018.

Some of our other relevant actions that have been taken after the New Delhi AMCDRR in 2016 are; an assessment mission to Afghanistan to ~~help~~ develop Afghanistan's strategy for disaster risk reduction, holding the first ECO workshop on School Safety Program, and supporting the initiation of UNESCO-HABITAT project on seismic hazard and risk analysis in Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan and Turkmenistan.

## ~~Dear Participants;~~

*remark*  
*the* Let me ~~conclude my statement with raising this pivotal issue~~ that implementation of the ECO Framework on DRR, after it is approved <sup>at</sup>, needs cooperation and support of Member States, relevant local, regional and international organizations and other stakeholders, for financing and managing some project activities that are reflected in the mentioned framework. These activities include; support to regulatory and institutional mechanisms on DRM capacities, support to improve disaster risk governance, strengthen multi-hazard early warning systems, strengthen post disaster damage loss and need assessment tools, public awareness and knowledge management, develop disaster risk transfer mechanism and tools, support to strengthen ECO regional disaster response mechanism, strengthen coordination and monitoring capacity at the ECO Secretariat.

**Ladies and Gentlemen;**

At the end, I am confident that this conference will accelerate, the effective ways and collective measures in the Asia region for enhanced disaster risk reduction, as well as "transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies".

Thank you very much for your kind attentions.