

**OFFICIAL STATEMENT OF H.E. SHEIKH SALEH HABIMANA, AMBASSADOR
OF THE REPUBLIC OF RWANDA IN CAIRO, EGYPT**

**AT THE AFRICA-ARAB PLATFORM ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION
09-13 OCTOBER 2018, TUNIS, TUNISIA**

Excellencies,

Esteemed Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is indeed a great pleasure to be part of this very important meeting on disaster risk reduction. On behalf of the Government of Rwanda and on my own behalf, I wish to highly commend the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), the African Union Commission (AUC), the League of Arab States (LAS), and other organizations and institutions for organizing this event under the outstanding theme: *“Towards Disaster Risk-Informed & Inclusive Sustainable Development.”* But in a specific way, I wish to record my appreciation to the Government of Tunisia for hosting us.

Rwanda my country, has put in place various measures for disaster risk reduction and is committed to achieving the goals and priorities of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and Sustainable Development Goals through actions and measures aiming at reducing disaster risks while building disaster-resilient communities.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

Owing to a confluence of factors such as the rapid urbanization, and the escalating impacts of climate change evidenced by extreme weather events and erratic climatic conditions; Rwanda’s disaster risks have increased significantly. In response, the country has put in place measures to combat such disaster effects.

Allow me, *ladies and gentlemen*, to highlight some of the points of the Sendai framework for Disaster Risk Reduction that are implemented in my country:

In the area of strengthening disaster risk Governance and investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience: Rwanda has demonstrated a strong political commitment to put in place policies, laws and institutions for effective disaster risk reduction. Rwanda has a dedicated Ministry of Disaster Management – the lead ministry with a clear disaster management mandate. It has developed and approved the National Disaster Management Policy, the National Disaster Risk Management Plan and the National Disaster Management Law has been enacted in 2015. Disaster risk reduction is integrated and mainstreamed in the Second Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy or EDPRS 2. Disaster Management Committees have also been established at all administrative levels.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

In the area of understanding Disaster Risk, and enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to “Build Back Better” in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction, the Ministry of Disaster Management and Refugees (MIDIMAR) launched a project entitled “*Development of comprehensive disaster risk profiles for enhancing disaster management in Rwanda*”. This includes quantification of risks and disaster losses with the aim of designing and informing future risk reduction and development strategies. The outcome of this project is the existing National Disaster Risk Atlas of Rwanda launched in September 2015.

Capacity development is at the core of our Ministry’s mandate. Capacity building of government and stakeholders at all levels is a regular endeavour of the government of Rwanda with support from UN Agencies, international organizations and other various partners.

Building public awareness and education for resilience is another Ministry’s mandate. Sustained efforts for mainstreaming disaster risk reduction in schools have been and are being undertaken. Disaster risk reduction clubs have been

created in schools and school curricula have been developed on disaster risk management.

Excellencies; Ladies and gentlemen;

As I end my remarks, I would like to reiterate our gratitude, and acknowledge the support of all partners; the UN System, the governments and other international organizations in assisting our country in a range of disaster risk reduction and development programmes. We underline here the Project “*Strengthening human security by enhancing resilience to natural disasters and climate-related threats in Ngororero District*” implemented in Ngororero District under the UN-Trust Fund for Human Security. We most welcome the continued technical and financial assistance from you –dear partners at the region and at the international level, as we strive to reduce disaster risks and build resilience. I also wish to thank all of you here; hon. Ministers, parliamentarians, experts, specialists, and all other dedicated women and men who, working together, make our region and the world a safer and resilient haven for all.

I, therefore, on behalf of the Government of Rwanda, hereby approve the adoption of all outcomes of the African regional platform and sign the Ministerial Declaration and recommendations on the implementation of the Africa Programme of Action for submission to the African Union Policy Organs for consideration and endorsement during the African Union Summit in early 2019.

Thank you.