ADDRESS BY THE HONOURABLE DEPUTY MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, PUBLIC WORKS AND NATIONAL HOUSING AT THE HIGH LEVEL PLATFORM OF THE AFRICA – ARAB PLATFORM ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

INTRODUCTION

-Your Excellences, Head of States and Government

- Development partners

- Representatives of various organizations

We are gathered here as a community of African and Arab people to reaffirm our commitment to accelerate the implementation of the Sendai Framework. Although our communities are enjoying economic growth we remain vulnerable to recurrent disasters with far reaching social, economic and environmental impacts.

Given this phenomenon Africa’s regional blocks including SADC continue to show their commitment to disaster risk reduction and the potential of the Sendai Framework’s immense contribution to the realization of Agenda 2063. “The Africa we want”. Investments in Disaster Risk Reduction have been gradually increasing and remarkable progress has been made through enhanced coordination and partnerships at national, regional, continental and global levels.

In support of the accelerated implementation of the seven targets of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR), in addition to the five targets of the Africa Programme of Action the Zimbabwean Government has integrated Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change
Adaptation (CCA) into the Economic Planning Framework of the country (as captured in the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Document)

- Integration of the DRR into our curricula (Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education 2015 -2022)
- Community Based Disaster Risk Management which is supported by Districts and Wards Disaster Plans. Response and Recovery Plans with reconstruction mechanisms as demonstrated in the Tsholotsho and Bulilima Districts after the 2016/2017 Cyclone Dineo induced flood disasters.
- Transboundary MOUs with other SADC member states as a way of strengthening regional networks and partnerships. Developing of new policy and Regulatory Frameworks as a way of creating the required enabling environment. The Bill is still at Draft stage

Zimbabwe is participating at this platform at the backdrop of experiencing a cholera outbreak which has claimed 54 lives. Through an appeal process for humanitarian assistance we adopted a policy of full disclosure in our determination to eradicate recurrence of such medieval diseases. Let me think our corporate world and the international community for the tremendous support the rendered in averting the disaster from degenerating into a devastating catastrophe. The support is also coming in form of a long term preventive solutions.

As Zimbabwe, we have managed to mainstream DRR and CCA into the operations of all stakeholders using the Civil Protection Platforms at all levels. The application of the Sendai Framework Monitor remains a challenge as the players are at different levels and capacities in disaster risk management. All this is a result of poor management of data prior and during the implementation of the Framework. Given this, the following challenges inform our National Plan of Actions.
1. Lack of data
   – there is need to develop a disaster robust reporter system as some damages go unreported.
   - This is being addressed with the support of our National Statistical Office and Capacity development at SADC and International levels

2. Early warning systems
   - Currently there are areas without radio reception and television coverage for dissemination of warning information
   - Poor or inadequate emergency alert mechanism for impending disasters
   - Resistance of communities to attend awareness campaigns
   - Epidemic early warning systems are not comprehensive
   - Early warning system do not address the needs of individual groups
   - Metrological data is still not specific to localities

3. Drivers of outbreaks
   - Eradication of open defecation both in rural and urban areas where illegal vending and vagrant population continue to balloon
   - Rehabilitation of antiquated water and sewerage infrastructure.
   - Illegal settlements which are even acerbating land degradation and pollution.

4. Fragmented Monitoring and evaluation of DRR programs
   - Lack of simulation or mock drills which is affecting tour efforts in enhancing our disaster preparedness.

In addressing some of the challenges harnessing the use of technology (ICTS) remains key in addressing our shortcomings in the areas of Early Warning System. And the need for a robust communication framework for dissemination of risk information to the vulnerable populations. In
addition, Zimbabwe is part of the ARC Family, a Family of 33 AU Member States whose secretariat is the ARC Agency.

Furthermore, the implementation of the SFDRR naturally dovetails with Zimbabwe’s Vision of creating an upper Middle Income Society by 2030. Alignment of the SFDRR to our vision becomes imperative.