

**Statement by H.E. Seiji KIHARA**  
**Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs**  
**at 70<sup>th</sup> Session of ESCAP: Side-Event for**  
**“Mainstreaming of Disaster Risk Reduction in the Asia-Pacific region:**  
**Paving the way to the Third World Conference on**  
**Disaster Risk Reduction”**  
**14:00-15:15, 7 August 2014, Bangkok**

**(INTRODUCTION)**

Thank you. At the outset, in the wake of a tragic earthquake occurred in Yunnan Province in China, on behalf of the Government and people of Japan, I express my heartfelt sympathy and condolences to the Government and people of China. Japan is ready to offer as much assistance as is needed, and I pray that the affected region will recover as soon as possible.

Now, I would like to thank all of you for joining us at this side event. Also, my special thanks go to Dr. Akhtar and distinguished panelists for sharing your knowledge and experience at this event. Today's theme is the disaster risk reduction, DRR, one of Japan's highest priorities in international cooperation. ESCAP, too, has played a significant role in enhancing disaster countermeasures in the Asia-Pacific region through its Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction. Thus, it is natural that Japan and ESCAP co-organize the side event on DRR in this 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Japan's membership in ESCAP.

**(FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE ESCAP TRUST FUND)**

Japan has been a strong advocator for tsunami preparedness as a tsunami prone country, and highly values ESCAP for the establishment of the Trust Fund for Tsunami, Disaster and Climate Preparedness in 2005 to build a tsunami early warning system in the Asia-Pacific region. To further strengthen our cooperation toward resilient Asia-Pacific region, today I announce that Japan will make **its first financial contribution** to the Trust Fund.

## **(DISASTER RISK REDUCTION FRAMEWORK BEYOND 2015)**

As the recent earthquake in Yunnan Province vividly reminded us, at any time and place, disasters occur, causing loss of many human lives and damage to the economy.

In order to raise awareness and enhance cooperation at global arena, Japan has twice hosted the UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in the past: the first (WCNDR) in 1994 and the second (WCDDR) in 2005. The Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), adopted at the second UN World conference, has served as a global guideline for national implementation of DRR measures in each country.

Following on from the two previous meetings, in March 2015, the third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDDR) will be held in Sendai, Japan. The conference will establish a framework for disaster risk reduction as the successor of HFA, in order to respond to new challenges to disasters, such as, growing urbanization resulting from rapid population increase, climate change, and an expanding global economy.

## **(DRR IN THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA)**

As the international community engages in intensive discussion on shaping the post-2015 development agenda, the integration of disaster risk reduction perspective in the development policies and planning is critical, since a disaster hampers long-term efforts for poverty eradication and sustainable development. “The establishment of a new DRR framework in Sendai” and “the clear introduction of disaster risk reduction in the post-2015 development agenda” are the two important goals in 2015 in mainstreaming disaster risk reduction in development. In order to achieve this, we need commitment from all corners of the world including the Asia-Pacific.

## **(THE THIRD WORLD CONFERENCE ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION)**

The third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, which is one the cities greatly affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami in March 2011, will be a golden opportunity for Japan to share the lessons learnt from the earthquake to build a more resilient society. A practical effort for reconstruction such as a re-examination of the land use plans, relocation of residences and communities to a higher ground will be introduced at the Conference.

The Conference will also be an opportunity for all participating countries to share their experiences and knowledge on disasters they have gone through. We hope that active discussions will be conducted in such areas as investment in disaster risk reduction, protection of the vulnerable people and empowerment of their ability, enhancement of early-warning and disaster response preparedness, and reinforcement of the governance structure of national and local governments.

In addition, on the margins of the Conference, various side events and study tours to the disaster-affected areas will be organized to let people witness first-hand the ongoing reconstruction and efforts for disaster risk reduction.

Last but not least, participation from the high-level representatives, such as heads of government and ministers, as well as high-profile practitioners are critical for the success of the Conference. Thus, on behalf of the Government of Japan, I would like to call for all of you to dispatch highest-level representatives to this event.

Thank you for your attention and I look forward to the discussion.