

First Session of Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, Geneva, 5-7 June 2007

Speech of Republic of Iraq Delegation

Delivered by Mr. Ahmad Abd El-Zohreh Hamada, Director from Ministry of Environmental Affairs

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to express our deep appreciation and thanks for the invitation to this important international conference and we wish every success for the participants and positive results in disaster risk reduction and reducing its negative impacts.

The Government of Iraq through the coordination of its Ministry of Environmental Affairs is making efforts in management of natural and human-induced disasters. Northern and eastern parts of Iraq are located on the earthquake fault line and the country is also exposed to the floods and sand storm, and therefore, the Ministry of Environmental Affairs has developed strategies and tools to establish and enhance meteorological monitoring stations.

Other activities and initiatives of Iraq include coordination and cooperation at local and regional levels, and implementation of some specific projects such as early warning project, co-organizing training courses with civil defense to address the risk of disasters. Cooperation with scientific and technical centers and promotion of the culture of disaster risk reduction and initiatives for enhancement of the local and national capacities are other activities in this regard, and the Ministry of Environmental Affairs will develop the necessary environmental regulations and arrangements in this regard.

Iraq is exposed to environmental risks caused by the military operations through the past three wars involved in. There are also the risk of radiations from materials which spread from some of industrial centers and to which the people are exposed and in risk of diseases such as cancer and poisoning.

Iraq is a member of the Regional Organization for the Protection of Marine Environment to protect the marine environment of Shat El-Arab and Gulf in cooperation and coordination with the neighboring countries. There is also plan to develop special programs for the removal of radiation pollution caused in some parts of Iraq , through Center for Prevention of Radiation, affiliated to the Ministry of Environmental Affairs and other concerned Ministries.

We look for a continued cooperation and also financial support from international organizations to our programs.

Thank you very much.