



The Islamic Republic of Iran

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Statement by

**H.E. Mr. Seyed Mehdi Hashemi**

**Deputy Minister of Interior of**

**the Islamic Republic of Iran**

at

**the First Session**

**of the Global Platform for Disaster Reduction**

**(5- 7 June, 2007, Geneva )**

## **In the Name of God**

### **the compassionate the Merciful**

**Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Distinguished delegates,**

This is a pleasure for me to participate in this first session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction and at the outset I wish to begin with extending our appreciation to H. E. Mr. John Holmes, Under-Secretary General of the U.N. and to Mr. Salvano Brecheno, the Director of UN/ISDR Secretariat, here in Geneva and his colleagues for their endeavors to organize this first Global Forum, for which we wish all the best of success. Our appreciations also goes to the Swiss government for the role it has played bringing about this Session.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, being located in a disaster-prone area, is committed to cooperation on disaster risk reduction with the international community, and therefore, attaches great importance to the current session. Iran has been an active party in the international humanitarian affairs as well as in disaster risk reduction. Iran's efforts in the course of International Decade for Disaster Reduction- INDR- followed by playing an active role in the WCDR are examples of such a role. Following WCDR we kept continuing the same manner in the course of consultations on strengthening the ISDR system and in implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action. Our activities have been based on the considerable experience we have acquired and the lessons learned in responding various natural disasters including earthquakes in Manjil (1990), Bam (2003) and Lorestan (2003).

The Islamic Republic of Iran has paid special attention to implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action, and in doing so, Iran was among the first countries to establish its national mechanism towards implementation of HFA as well as for setting up its national platform for disaster risk reduction. We also host the first specialized collaborative regional center on seismic risk reduction in Asia-Pacific (ASRC) which was launched in May 2007. We have established constructive cooperation with UN/ISDR Secretariat for implementation of HFA objectives and promoting the ASRC plan. The center is going to commence its programs and activities after finalizing a detailed Plan of

Action and consequently play its role as a collaborative center for regional cooperation on seismic risk reduction in Asia- Pacific region.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Based on the lessons learnt in constant management of natural hazards, the Islamic Republic of Iran believes, that the International Community should intensify its efforts in strengthening the ISDR system. In doing so we are of the belief that the following points are of immense importance:

- Building suitable arrangements based on global, regional and national platforms, while avoiding unnecessary bureaucracy. In this direction, inter-sessional arrangements with the participation and contribution of stakeholders, active countries and pertinent UN agencies is of the essential importance.
- We put emphasis on the role that States could play in the ISDR policy making process as well as in inter-sessional arrangements, given the fact that States are considered as the primary key actors for implementing the ISDR policies and modalities.
- A well balanced approach to all phases of disaster management is believed to be missing. Regrettably for a variety of reasons, yet resources both at national and international levels are mostly tended towards rescue and relief operations, while we believe that building a culture of prevention is indeed of utmost importance.
- Mobilization of resources towards prevention programs at national levels should be based on the HFA priorities.
- Data, information, knowledge and experience sharing and disaster risk reduction management requires further serious measures to be taken by developed countries. We believe that an effective international cooperation in scientific and technical fields can be easily led to enhance disaster risk management in all its phases including early warning, prevention, rescue, relief, mitigation and reconstruction.
- In all the above-mentioned outlines, the advocacy and coordinating role of the UN/ISDR Secretariat is essential.
- International cooperation on disaster risk reduction should be based on purely humanitarian basis and not political considerations.

**Mr. Chairman**

The people and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran experienced the spirit of international solidarity at the time of the disaster in Bam earthquake. We enjoyed generous humanitarian assistance from many countries, UN agencies and other international organizations and NGOs. I would like to express our profound appreciation for all those assistance extended to us.

In conclusion Mr. Chairman, I do hope this session, which is regarded as a milestone in strengthening the ISDR system, will be successful in taking effective steps and in drawing guidelines towards its humanitarian goals. I would like to assure this august session of the full support of my delegation for realization of the Session's objectives.

Thank you.