

Official Statement of the Republic of Korea

Esteemed Ministers, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

I am Gye Jo Kim, Director General for the Bureau of Disaster Prevention Management in the National Emergency Management Agency, Republic of Korea. First of all, it is indeed a great honour to be here today at the 4th Global Platform and I would like to express my sincere gratitude to UNISDR for hosting this event, and I am also honored to meet delegates from different countries and organizations.

It is with great pleasure that I have the opportunity today, to address disaster risk reduction framework in Korea. The National Management Emergency Agency was established in June 2004 as the first independent disaster management government authority in Korea. It is responsible for implementing effective policies in natural and man-made disaster management, civil defense, and fire-fighting.

NEMA Korea has initiated ‘forward-looking approach’ for response operation. It has designed an active and anticipatory response system that focuses on creating preventive policies and frameworks rather than response focused traditional disaster management.

Disaster prevention criteria for critical infrastructure have been adjusted in order to take account of climate change and increase financial investment for vulnerable areas. In addition, Pre-Disaster Impact Assessment (PDIA) has been carried out since 2004 to predict and evaluate disaster risks increased by development projects. Moreover, the policy of Comprehensive Flood Mitigation Plan was introduced in order to develop a long term disaster management plan for every five years.

When a typhoon hits, the national government mobilizes personnels in the sites that are most likely to be affected. For massive emergencies, the National Disaster and Safety Countermeasures Headquarters is being operated in cooperation with line ministries. At the same time, local governments coordinate under the Provincial Safety Management Headquarters. The national government actively engages with various stakeholder and builds strong coordination mechanism.

Besides, the head of local provinces, districts, and volunteer organizations monitor vulnerable areas and carry out preventive measures to minimize casualties from disasters. For rapid emergency response measures, there are various regional voluntary organizations established where local residents can freely participate.

In order to minimize and counteract massive disasters that occur due to climate change, NEMA will not only implement preventive disaster policies, but also continue to establish strong international cooperation for disaster risk reduction. Particularly, Korea has actively been engaged with the Hyogo Framework for Action. Moreover, the national government is taking a strong initiative to implement the upcoming Post-2015 Framework.

To prepare for HFA2, Korea has organized a national Task Force led by the Prime Minister's Office since December 2012 and selected nine key action plans as the agenda for Korea's Post-2015 Framework, which has been presented at the 1st UN IAP(ISDR Asia Partnership) this April.

Some of the key points are as the following:

First, disaster risk reduction integrated framework must be developed in every sector of government ministries to achieve sustainable development.

Second, the concept of disaster management has to be reflected from the planning stages of national development.

Third, with the increasing numbers of vulnerable population to disasters such elderly, women, children and others, a strong social safety net must be established to provide better protection of this population.

Fourth, a strategic disaster assessment and response system must be developed so that integrated administration can be practiced among different line ministries.

Fifth DRR technology should be advanced by applying state-of-the art technology in other sectors such as space technology and nano technology.

Sixth, interactive knowledge generation system for national disaster risk assessment must be established to educate and train DRR experts. Lastly, multi-stakeholder data & knowledge sharing should be encouraged.

Natural disasters are no longer a national crisis but a trans-boundary issue as their occurrence and damages are not limited in one specific country. Therefore, international cooperation and countermeasure efforts are vital in advancing disaster risk reduction to build a resilient society for our future generations.

When the national and international DRR efforts on DRR are headed towards the same direction, we would be able to establish a world resilient from natural disasters.

In the coming years, NEMA Korea will concede and actively participate in the Post-2015 Framework. At the same time, it will continue building strong partnerships with UN ISDR and other international organizations for disaster risk reduction not only in Asia but throughout the world.

Thank you.//