



Statement of Voluntary Commitment of Asia Media Stakeholder Group for the 6th Asian Ministerial Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction

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Given its unparalleled reach to wide audiences, the media could play a crucial role in promoting disaster risk reduction policies, early warnings for disasters and advancing regional and national disaster risk reduction agendas. In order to fulfill media's immense potential as an information disseminator and powerful behavior changer, media should be accepted not as a mere messenger but a partner in developing and implementing DRR policies at regional, national and local levels. As the common denominator for all stakeholders in the DRR processes media could bridge the gaps in communications and dismantle the silos in which most stakeholders work at the moment.

Many media organizations in the Asia-Pacific region already accept their duty to serve wide audiences (including most vulnerable groups such as women, children, youth, persons with disabilities and elderly) before, during, after disasters. More importantly, they recognize the need to be pro-actively preparing people during quieter times between disasters. This was demonstrated when more than 300 delegates, representing broadcast media, NGOs, academia and Disaster Management Offices across the region, issued a Statement of Commitment during the ABU Media Summit on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Jakarta 5 – 6 June, 2014. They committed to support media to expand coverage of climate change and DRR and educate their audiences on these issues. They also recognized the huge gap in media knowledge and expertise to do so and that the "messengers" have to be educated themselves about the complex issues of climate change impacts and mitigations and DRR.

In accepting to play such a crucial role in informing, educating the public and galvanizing action for advancing the DRR agenda throughout the region, the Asia Media Stakeholder Group confirms its support for the HFA process and commits to:

- Work with all stakeholders involved in DRR to facilitate broad partnership in risk prevention and building resilient communities;
- Ensure that the radio and TV organisations' infrastructure and networks are better integrated

in the early warning disaster communication systems and plans at national and community levels;

- Engage media in the development and implementation of national DRR policies and programmes, so the media, especially broadcast media, are more comprehensively prepared to inform about risk prevention and DRR;
- Enhance journalists capacity to produce quality programmes on climate change, DRR and sustainable development concepts as part of the same solution for economic growth and social cohesion;
- Create space for coverage of and discussions on climate change and DRR issues in the form of special regular programmes, editorial columns and mainstreaming DRR in news, current affairs, children programmes and other radio and TV formats.