



## PRESS RELEASE 07/18

### ASIAN GOVERNMENTS TO MEET IN MONGOLIA ON DISASTER PREVENTION

**BANGKOK/GENEVA, 27 March, 2018** - Governments from the world's most disaster-prone region will meet in Mongolia in July to discuss acceleration of efforts vital for the sustainable future of the region including how to prevent disasters and tackle climate change while reviewing progress in reducing disaster losses.

The Government of Mongolia and the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) will host the 2018 Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction July 3-6 in Ulaanbaatar City under the theme "Preventing Disaster Risk: Protecting Sustainable Development."

It is estimated that the region lost US\$ 1.3 trillion in assets between 1970 and 2016 as a result of disasters. In 2017, 6,543 people lost their lives in over 200 major disasters affecting 66.7 million people.

Disaster risk across the region is exacerbated by high levels of poverty, climate change, rapid urbanisation and exposure to the entire spectrum of natural hazards including drought, floods, cyclones, earthquakes and heatwaves.

The Prime Minister of Mongolia, Mr. Khurelsukh Ukhnaa, said: "It is three years since UN Member States adopted the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the global plan to reduce disaster losses. In Asia we have a regional plan for implementation and this Conference will be an opportunity for governments and partners to review progress in areas such as reducing the numbers of people affected by disasters and reining in economic losses."

Mr. Khurelsukh who was designated a UNISDR Champion at the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in 2017, added: "The Conference will also be a major boost to regional and cross-border cooperation on reducing disaster risk and taking action on climate change. Progress in Asia is vital to success in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the overall 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development."

The UN Special Representative for Disaster Risk Reduction, Ms. Mami Mizutori, said: "The Asian Ministerial Conference will develop an action plan for the next two years. This will include a renewed focus on Target (e) of the Sendai Framework that aims for a substantial increase in the number of countries with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020. Asia's lead in this important area is vital as we step up efforts to monitor progress on achieving the targets on reducing disaster losses in the Sendai Framework."

Ms Loretta Hieber Girardet, Chief of UNISDR's Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, said: "The worst disasters that could happen have not happened yet. Reducing the risk of their occurrence is more important in Asia given the high levels of exposure to disaster risk. The Asian Ministerial Conference comes at an opportune time with the launch in March of the Sendai Framework Monitor. This is the online tool hosted by UNISDR which allows countries to report their progress on reducing disaster losses against the Sendai Framework targets."

Over 3,000 delegates are expected to participate in the event, where the governments will adopt the 'Ulaanbaatar Declaration' and the stakeholder groups will issue voluntary commitments.

A key feature of the conference will be an Asia Video Contest on Disaster Risk Reduction that will showcase success stories in building resilience at national, local and community levels. Launching the Contest in Ulaanbaatar City on 24 January 2018, Mr. Enkhtuvshin Ulziisaikhan, Deputy Prime Minister of Mongolia and chairperson of the 2018 Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, called on the international community to share learning and innovation through good practices and lessons learned in disaster risk management to mutually support the implementation of the Sendai Framework.

The conference will be supported by several partner organisations and will feature a ministerial segment, technical and thematic sessions, featured events and public forum.

For more information, see: <http://www.unisdr.org/amcdrr2018>