

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

DiDRRN partners are highly concerned that disability did not receive notable attention within the *Hyogo Framework for Action, 2005-2015* (HFA). As such, disability, and the voices of people with disability themselves, have been largely absent from disaster risk reduction (DRR) policy and practice to date. Since the drafting of the HFA, there have been significant international developments concerning disability and DRR that urge reflection as we move towards a new framework post-2015.

In 2006, the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (CRPD) came into being. Alongside the obligation for State Parties to 'closely consult with persons with disabilities' 'in the development and implementation of legislation and policies' (Article 4.3), the CRPD makes specific reference to risk and disasters. Article 11 specifies that 'State Parties shall take [...] all necessary measures to ensure the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risk, including [...] humanitarian emergencies and the occurrence of natural disasters'.

The first *World Disability Report* was recently published in 2011 by the World Health Organisation & World Bank. The report notes that previous estimates of the number of people living with disability worldwide were grossly underestimated. We now understand that between 15-20% of the world's population are living with disability. This figure is expected to rise and may be considered higher still in a developing country context.

There has also been progress towards addressing gaps in the HFA at regional levels. In 2012, governments of the Asia-Pacific signed the *Incheon Strategy to 'Make the Right Real' for Persons with Disabilities*. Goal 7 of the Incheon Strategy commits to 'ensure disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction and management' (UNESCAP, 2012).

DiDRRN partners respectfully urge distinguished delegates, and participants, at the Fourth Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction to:

- Recognise and fulfil commitments to disability-inclusive DRR in line with the CRPD post-2015.
- Commit to working towards the full and active participation of persons with disabilities in DRR policy and practice post-2015.
- Recognise and acknowledge the cross-cutting nature of disability.
- Recognise and acknowledge that disability increases risk across all groups; including, those already at-risk.

DiDRRN partners politely remind delegates, and participants, that at the very heart of DRR is the collective concern of limiting risk and of reducing vulnerability for individuals, communities and nations. We sincerely trust that all may agree that to continue to not include the most at-risk within DRR undermines the very foundation of our collective efforts.

We thank you for your consideration and support.

Prepared by:

The Disability-inclusive DRR Network for Asia-Pacific