



Address by

***His Royal Highness Prince  
Turki Bin Nasser Bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud***

Chairman of the Executive Office of the  
Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment  
General President of the  
Meteorology and Environmental Protection  
Saudi Arabia

In the Special Session to review the  
Regional and International progress  
Second Global Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction  
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Your Excellency / Sir John Holmes  
Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations for Humanitarian Assistance, Head of the Second Global Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction

Excellencies and the heads of delegations

Ladies and Gentlemen

*Peace be upon you and Allah's mercy and blessings ,,,,,*

It is my pleasure today to participate in the activities of the Second Global Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction and the witch is designed to sustain the International Movement for Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters that represents a major global gathering of government representatives and stakeholders from the organizations of the United Nations and regional organizations and international and regional financial institutions and the private sector and the scientific and academic communities, to assess the progress made in implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action and the exchange of experiences in the world in disaster risk reduction, and identify remaining gaps and the steps needed to accelerate the implementation regional and national levels. It also reflects the international attention to address the disaster risk reduction through the global partnership for the benefit of all countries nations .

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Arab region similar to some regions, confronts with increased natural hazards such as earthquakes, floods, volcanoes, dust storms and hurricanes, in addition to the risks arising from climate change including sea level rise and drought. The floods are also more frequently hazards in the region, but earthquake still is the most hazards to humans and damage the economy.

The Arab region characterized, by the increase in vulnerability, due to the small capacity of risk of disaster, of about 89% of the territory of the Arab region is arid or semi-arid along with the challenges of

lack of water sources and the vulnerability of populations and the environment to damage. Which results in an increase in the number of natural disasters in the region and their consequences, that in turn lead to loss of development. Such disasters result from a combination of factors including the rapid increase in population growth, increased rates of unplanned urban growth and climate change. However, despite the impact of the rates of recurrence of the disaster remains a culture of disaster response, capacity building and training is the best way to reduce risks in the Arab region. In addition to that there is great importance to disaster response and management, the methodology and the best way to deal with this issue in the long term.

From this point of view, and in the Arab region, the Arab region participation of the world to ensure the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and the integration of disaster risk reduction into policies, programs and plans for sustainable development, as established by a permanent item on the agenda of the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment and its Executive Office. Also the League of Arab States prepared with the contribution of its specialized organizations, in cooperation with the United Nations Secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, the first regional report on the progress made in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action in the Arab region in 2009. The report was considered in a regional workshop hosted in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia in May, the organization of joint technical secretariat of the League of Arab States and the Islamic Development Bank and the United Nations Secretariat of the strategy, and with the participation of representatives of governments and some regional organizations and international organizations of the United Nations.

The report concluded that there is some progress on the level of political commitment and national risk reduction and to develop mechanisms and strategies, and institutional strengthening of early warning systems and capacity-building for preparedness and response to disasters. However, in most cases that was not translating the commitment into practical and operational capabilities and provide the resources necessary to ensure the

implementation of these strategies or to effectively integrate risk reduction into development plans. There is progress on the low level of education and public awareness, very little has been done on the collection and providing access to data and information on risk and vulnerability, or on the development of tools and methodological approaches to deal with disaster risk reduction. And concluded the following recommendations:

- A review of progress in the Arab region on an ongoing basis and periodically taking into account the integrity of the audit in 2009, and the distribution of results on the challenges and obstacles, good practices in the Arab region to ensure the attention and follow-up by States Parties and concerned regional organizations.
- The emphasis is to address disaster risk in the context of climate change trends and risks and the involvement of multiple different parties, with a focus on strengthening national coordination and regional coordination and exchange of information in this regard.
- Prepare to be an Arab strategy for disaster risk reduction, which will reflect regional priorities and vision and program implementation and technical and financial mechanisms to support implementation at the national level.
- There will be a regional Arabic forum every two years, with the participation of all parties concerned, and include a meeting at ministerial level.

I am pleased to announce the hosting of Saudi Arabia for the First Arab Regional Forum, and the allocation of the money prize for the best practices on disaster risk reduction.

In conclusion, I wish the success of our deliberations..