



League of Arab States

Statement of
The League of Arab States

Before
The Third Session of the Global Platform for
Disaster Risk Reduction

Presented by
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Wednesday, 05/11/2011

In the name of God the Merciful the Compassionate

Madam President,
Excellencies, Representatives of Governments and
Organizations,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Peace, mercy and blessings of God

I have the honor to give you a quick glimpse of the regional challenges and achievements in the Arab region, and what we look forward to in cooperating with you to promote the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action.

The Arab countries are suffering heavy losses as a result of its exposure to natural hazards and associated risks. These have cost the Arab economies about \$ 22 billion between the years 1970-2010. The Arab countries are always vulnerable to the risk of an imminent, frightening, and hidden threat, namely; drought and its consequences. Unfortunately, drought does not get the sufficient international attention it merits, and there is a need to adopt standards for the measurement of its risk to improve identification and

management. Furthermore, the Region is currently witnessing a clear increase in the frequency of dust storms out of the normal expected times of their occurrence, which also have serious negative effects. Climate change will exacerbate the situation.

There is also a risk of a tsunami that is not only linked to the real fault lines in the layers of the earth's crust in the Arab region, but is also related to countries outside the region such as Greece and some islands of the Mediterranean Sea. Needless to say, the causes of risks constitute real pressures to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and realize sustainable development in the Arab region. This is more aggravated by two elements, first; conflicts and wars taking place in the region. Second; the existence of nuclear reactors in neighboring countries that would expose the Region to risks that the Arab region cannot confront.

Distinguished Delegates,

As you see, serious challenges face our region. However, the Arab countries have accomplished great achievements, as reflected in the Statements of a number of Arab delegations. At the regional level, the Arab Summit of January 2011 adopted the Arab Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (ASDRR).

The purpose of ASDRR is to formulate a vision and priorities of the general strategy for the Arab region, based on the natural hazards it currently faces and the disasters it faced before, as well as the strengthening of institutional mechanisms and coordination. There are five main priorities of the strategy. They are consistent with the priorities of the Hyogo Framework for Action. The Arab strategy will pave the way to build capacities to reduce disaster losses. I invite you to view this Strategy which is available in hard copy and electronically and on the USB that has been distributed.

The League of Arab States, with the support of the United Nations Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and its regional office for Arab States, and other partners, is developing a Work Program for the implementation of the Strategy. This Work Program will be discussed at the first meeting of the Arab Regional Forum for the Disaster Risk Reduction to be held in September 2011, and you are all invited to participate in its work.

I would like to emphasize the importance of partnership and international cooperation, which requires the presence of an international system for disaster risk reduction that is strong and

autonomous, with resources and capabilities that would enhance efforts to reduce disaster risks regionally and nationally. I would like to assure you of the commitment of the Arab League to continue its efforts to reduce disaster risks.

Before I conclude, I take this opportunity to thank the Secretariat of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and its regional office for Arab States in Cairo for their support to the efforts of disaster risk reduction in the Arab region.

Thank you.