



MALAYSIA

THIRD UNITED NATIONS WORLD CONFERENCE ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

OFFICIAL STATEMENT BY:

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DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER**

**SENDAI, JAPAN
15 MARCH 2015**

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H.E TAN SRI MUHYIDDIN MOHD YASSIN
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
HEAD OF DELEGATION, MALAYSIA**

**Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

1. At the outset, allow me to congratulate the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) for the convening of the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction as well as the Government of Japan for hosting this event.

2. This year's conference is a pivotal one, as we have come at a critical juncture in our efforts to make a huge difference in the world we live in; to make it safer in order to protect our economy and people, from the devastating effects of natural disasters. Due to the fact that no country, even the most developed is immune from the impact of natural disasters, disaster risk reduction (DRR) and resilience have become one of the rare pertinent issues of common interest of both the developing and the developed world.

3. The signing of the Hyogo Framework for Action represents a strong commitment from the international community to address disaster risk reduction and to engage in a determined, result-based plan of action.

4. Now that the HFA is coming to the end, it is imperative that we come up with a successor document that not only further strengthen our focus on reducing disaster risks, but also one that link-up with other strategic documents, namely the

post-2015 development agenda, and the global agreement on climate change in order to further improve our efforts to build resilience of nations.

**Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentleman,**

5. Malaysia by reason of its geographical location has always been considered less vulnerable but in recent years, our exposure to a range of climate-related disasters has intensified in part, due to climate change. Weather extremes are occurring more frequently and with higher intensities.

6. The 2014 year end downpour and floods was the worst ever in the country's history, affecting more than half a million people and damages to public infrastructure alone was estimated at RM2.851 billion. Areas that have never experienced floods before were also inundated and flood water rose at an unprecedented level.

7. Looking at the current trend, more and more holistic and innovative approaches to address disaster risks are becoming mandatory, given the close inter-relationship and inextricable links that exist between disaster risks and other key challenges of poverty reduction, urbanization, sustainable development, as well as environmental stability in light of the reality of global climate change.

**Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentleman,**

8. DRR has always been in the mainstream of Malaysia's development policy as manifested by the substantial resources that has been provided to reduce underlying risk factors and promote sustainable development in the nation's primary development plan – the "Five Year Malaysia Plan".

9. We are now into our 11th Malaysia Plan and there will be explicit focus on strengthening disaster risk management, covering both structural and non-structural measures. The five phases of disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery will be given emphasis to tackle the problem of floods and other emerging hazards in a holistic manner.

10. In 2011, the Government adopted the Melaka Declaration on Disaster Risk Reduction which encapsulates Malaysia's direction on disaster risk reduction in line with the priority areas of the HFA. The Melaka Declaration also provides guiding principles for the Malaysia Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction (MyDRR) which serves to integrate disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, engage communities, and build resilience at the local level.

11. Malaysia's National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction was formalized in 2013 and this process involved expanding the array of stakeholders involved to include policy-makers and practitioners from governments, universities, non-governmental organizations, as well as representatives from the private sector to take ownership of disaster risk reduction initiatives in the country. I am proud to report that this effort is now yielding outstanding results in terms of marshalling science and technology for disaster management in Malaysia.

12. This 'Science to Action Initiative' aims to nurture networking among researchers, academics, government agencies, and the private sector in order to strengthen implementation of a multi-stakeholder local level solutions, where initial focus is on floods.

13. The setting up of the Scientific Expert Panel on Disaster Risk Reduction will serve as the primary platform for the application of science towards disaster management. The Scientific Expert Panel will bring together key public and private science institutions in the country under the aegis of the

National Science, Technology, and Industry Council chaired by the Prime Minister of Malaysia to provide timely and evidence-based inputs to support the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.

14. In my capacity as Minister of Education, I have also allocated RM20 million to universities in Malaysia to conduct forensic studies, and multi-disciplinary research within several major river basins to support disaster management. The findings from the research will be channelled to the National Platform and transformed into action oriented initiatives in conjunction with practitioners from the public and private sector as well as the community.

**Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

15. The December 2014 floods experienced by Malaysia serve to remind us that we still have more to do in building the nation's resilience toward disasters. We are now looking into and learning from the best practices of other countries with a view to adapt it where suitable.

16. To be able to keep up with the current disaster scenario of the country, Malaysia is also mooting to reshape our disaster management agency to become more robust as well as to establish a centre of excellence for research on disaster management.

17. Due to the fact that an effective early warning system can make the difference between life and death, Malaysia is looking towards integrating the country's early warning systems. The ability to deliver vital information and impact forecast to the right target groups allows for a swift decision making and response to protect people's livelihoods.

**Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

18. In the context of Southeast Asia, the establishment of ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) in 2003 has brought upon many progress and achievements toward building the resilience of ASEAN Member States. The most significant was the signing and ratification of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) which is the only Hyogo Framework for Action-related legally binding instrument in the world.

19. Malaysia is ever committed toward the works of ASEAN; in particular the ACDM in reducing risks and respond collectively and expeditiously to disasters in the region. Given the borderless nature of most natural hazards, both international and regional collaboration is necessary. Malaysia is determined to play its due role during its chairmanship of ASEAN this year to forge meaningful collaboration and to realize the vision of 'ASEAN Responding to Disasters as One'.

20. Malaysia also acknowledges the efforts of the UNISDR in promoting and implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action over the past decade. We are committed to support the post-2015 framework as the key mechanism for disaster risk reduction. We encourage the continued fostering of UNISDR's role and furthering its capacity to support disaster risk reduction especially in the Asia Pacific region.

21. Lastly before I close, Malaysia looks forward to the fruitful outcome of this conference especially the adoption of the post-2015 successor document to the HFA and achieving consensus on how local, national, regional, and international stakeholders can work together and effectively address the new challenges brought about by disaster and climate change.

22. Thank You.