

Statement of Romania,
Delivered by HE Dr Raed ARAFAT
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at the
3rd WORLD CONFERENCE FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION
(Sendai, Japan, 14th-18th March 2015)

Mr President,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, I would like to express my gratitude to the Government of Japan for its generous offer to host the Conference and for its valuable contribution to the International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR).

At the same time, I would like to extend my appreciation for all the activities undertaken by the United Nations (UN) through the International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (UN ISDR) in implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 (HFA), which represents an important phase in the disaster risk reduction efforts.

In this context, I would like to underline the efforts undertaken by the United Nations (UN) in the preparatory process for developing the Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and reaffirm Romania's full support for promoting and implementing disaster risk reduction measures.

Romania, as one of the countries which adopted The Hyogo Framework for Action in 2005 , has undertaken numerous actions for implementing disaster risk reduction strategy, such as: making efforts for increasing resilience of population through information campaigns regarding exposure, awareness and protective measures against disasters, enhancing and developing early warning systems.

At the same time, improving preparedness, endowment and response procedures has lead recently to the development of a fully integrated preparedness and response system dealing with daily response to medical and non-medical emergency situations, ready to respond to major incidents and disasters, should they happen.

Romania's territory is exposed to a large number of natural risks as a result of its geographical position and landscape, such as: earthquakes, floods, landslides, dangerous meteorological phenomena and forest fires, as well as, industrial risks as result of economic activities which use technologies with hazardous materials. The authorities with roles in risk management have made efforts for reducing and eliminating existing risks in order to fulfill the aim of civil protection: protecting people's life.

In order to enhance the understanding of the risks, in all their dimensions, the level of vulnerability, capacities and exposure of persons and assets, and characteristics of the hazards, Romania is running a risk assessment process at the national level, which will represent the base of the whole process of understanding and risk awareness in order to elaborate strategies and programs for reducing and maintaining risks at an acceptable level.

At international level, Romania supports the implementation of Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) and has made efforts to fulfill the general goal: disaster risk reduction at international level. To this end, Romania keenly participates in the activities organised within the International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) as well as in the regional initiatives for disaster risk reduction such as European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction (EFDRR) and Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative for South Eastern Europe (DPPI SEE).

As member of the European Union (EU), Romania has enhanced its role in decision making process within the European Institutions by designating liaison officers for General Directorate of EU Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department (DG ECHO), actively participating in the Working Group on Civil Protection (PROCIV), in the Civil Protection Committee of European Commission and Experts Group Meetings of the Responsible Authorities Committee for Implementing SEVESO II Directives.

In order to enhance cooperation within the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism, Romania – represented by its General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations --, took part in the civil protection experts training and experts exchange program; has sent experts and evaluation / observation teams to join the emergency situations management exercises. Romania participated in activities for providing international relief, requested through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism and in many programs co-financed by European Commission.

Besides, an Urban Search and Rescue Team, with the General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations, received, in 2014, the accreditation to the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) for disaster response in accordance with United Nations (UN) and European Union (EU) standards. At present, this team is employed in training more teams nation-wide in order to increase the level of

preparedness and response to major disasters, especially earthquakes, in Romania as well as outside Romania.

Romania is continuously committed to increasing disaster prevention actions, making constant efforts for improving and consolidating the National System for Disaster Management, in order to contribute within United Nations (UN) and European Union (EU) partnerships to achieving the global goal of disaster risk reduction by increasing disaster resilience and maintaining a peaceful climate and prosperity worldwide.

I would like to underline the importance of the health-related issues in preparing and responding to disasters which are of utmost importance, since they have a long term impact on the affected populations.

In order to achieve its goals, disaster risk reduction cannot be the mission of one country or region but a common mission of all the nations around the world.

Day by day, our world is becoming smaller and interdependencies are more and more obvious and important.

Only together, as United Nations, we can act correctly and efficiently to maximize the disaster risk reduction activities and also maximize disaster resilience.

I am confident that this Conference will take us one step closer to our goal: substantial reduction of disaster risks, increased preparedness for building more resilient communities.

Thank you for your attention!