

Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

**Preparatory Committee
Palais des Nations, 14-15 July 2014**

Statement by Mr. Raj Mohabeer, Officer in Charge, General Secretariat, Indian Ocean Commission

Mr. Chair,

We are indeed happy to intervene at this Preparatory Committee to provide our views on the future Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) which will be adopted in Sen Dai next year.

Disaster risk management is an essential part of sustainable development, our ultimate goal. It is important always to keep in mind that disaster is the materialization of a risk.

There is therefore need for a global approach towards Disaster Risk Management. However, we think that there is a need for flexibility in its implementation at the national level. Each region or each country must however adopt very well defined programmes for the implementation of the Strategy and should also draw specific indicators for monitoring of progress.

Concerning increasing physical damage and economic loss which is one of the main plague in the Indian Ocean Commission countries, we should be able to measure not only risk reduction, as was done in the Hyogo Framework of Action, but find ways to also measure risk generation and resilience. We have started with the technical assistance of UNISDR and financial assistance of the EU an innovative approach in this area. We are first defining accurately the nature and extent of the main factors that are slowing, or are likely to slow down, sustainable development objectives, or even imperil its progress. Then, as a second step, we intend to put in place policies and practical measures to limit the negative impact of these factors.

The 2013 Global Assessment report of the UNISDR makes the point very convincingly that the Small Island Developing States have the world's highest relative disaster risk. Climate change will largely magnify disaster risks in SIDS, due to sea level rise and associated flood and storm surge hazards, the increasing intensity of cyclonic winds, and coastal erosion. Climate change impacts are likely to cause important economic losses that will severely reduce the GDP.

We must therefore give priority to risk strategies that combine adaptation to climate change and risk reduction measures. These measures must be integrated into national development plans and into public investment planning. Risk management must become a central element of government policy. Investments in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation are likely to reap greater benefits than in any other group of countries.

The Indian Ocean Commission is ready not only to participate but also to bring its full contribution to the future Strategy and Action that will accompany it.

In order to achieve tangible result at the regional and country level, we must be able to benefit from strong technical support for the establishment of accurate risk assessments in each country. Currently, methodologies are available that can be used to reach this goal. However, it is essential to ensure a continued transfer of technology to enable all of us to appropriate the necessary techniques, as well as continued support over the years to ensure perfect mastery and application by the countries themselves.

Thank you