



Lao People's Democratic Republic

Statement

by

**His Excellency Mr. Asang Laoly,
Deputy Prime Minister, Chair of the
National Disaster Prevention and Control
Committee**

**at the Third UN World Conference on
Disaster Risk Reduction**

14 – 18 March 2014

Sendai City, Japan

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Madame President,
His Excellency Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan,
His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General of the United Nations,
Excellencies Heads of States and Governments,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, on behalf of the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to Her Excellency Eriko Yamatani, Minister of State for Disaster Management of Japan, on your election as President of the Conference. I am convinced that under your able leadership the Conference will be crowned with great success.

Let me also take this opportunity to express our profound congratulations to the government of Japan for the excellent arrangements made for the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in the City of Sendai, which was hit by one of the most devastating natural disasters in our recent history. Nevertheless, I am greatly impressed by the bold spirit and resolve shown by the government and people of Japan, especially the people of Sendai who have dedicated every effort and wisdom to incredibly reconstruct and rehabilitate the city to its normalcy and beauty in a short period of time.

Madame President,

Over the past decade, our preparedness and capacity to respond to natural disasters have been increasingly enhanced both in terms of effectiveness and efficiency, thus enabling us to reduce impacts of natural disasters such as floods and draughts that occur frequently. Such good progress is made possible thanks to our cooperation and efforts in actively and seriously implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action, including taking integrated and timely response measures, sharing information, good practices and technologies and making the natural disaster risk reduction and prevention issue as an important priority agenda of the country.

However, over the past 10 years, our world has continued to be seriously affected by natural disasters, partly due to human activities and impacts of climate change. The Great East Japan Earthquake, particularly the tsunami that stormed the city of Sendai, was one of the most destructive natural disasters in the past decade. During this decade, over 700 thousand people lost their lives, around 23 million were made homeless and more than 1.5

billion people were affected by disasters in various ways. In terms of economic loss, it was more than 1.3 trillion US dollars. All of this is an enormous impact on lives, assets, social status and socio-economic development in the world. such impacts of natural disasters have not limited themselves only to a particular place or site of disaster, but their extent is often widespread across regions and beyond. Against this back drop, it requires enhanced international cooperation and preventive measures to reduce natural disaster risks and impacts.

Madame President,

Over the past decade, the Government of the Lao PDR has attached importance to disaster risk reduction and mitigation of disaster impacts by developing appropriate policy and measures including implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action. All of this has reflected through the adoption of the strategies on disaster management and climate change at the national and local levels, contributing significantly to the overall goal of the national development. The Government has also mainstreamed such strategies into the 6th and 7th Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plans for the period of 2006-2010 and 2011-2015, respectively. We will continue to integrate the disaster and climate risk management into the next NSEDP and Vision 2030. The Government has further strengthened the coordinating mechanism known as the National Disaster Prevention and Control Committee, aimed at empowering this Committee to make decision in a more timely and coordinated manner, especially in the emergency situation so as to reduce disaster impacts. At the same time, the resource mobilization mechanism for disaster risk management has been improved as an integral part of state resource mobilization mechanism in order to centralize and accelerate resource flow for relief efforts including pre and post disaster period.

Madame President,

Despite appropriate policy and measures, the Lao PDR is still facing some challenges such as insufficient institutional, legal and regulatory frameworks to support disaster and climate risk management; low level of public awareness and management capacity and poor general public preparedness in the wake of natural calamities; limited resources for the implementation of disaster risk reduction measures; which is often allocated only on emergency cases or

case by case basis; and lack of resources for post disaster recovery and rehabilitation activities.

Nevertheless, the Government of the Lao PDR stands ready to continue to cooperate with the international community to prevent and reduce natural disaster risks, and reaffirms its commitment to contribute to the global efforts in achieving the outcome and goal of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction. We will pay attention to further combining disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation and integrating them into our national socio-economic development plans; enhancing public and private partnership, aimed at making the disaster risk reduction a duty of all, including public and private sectors and all people in the society; strengthening an early warning system and preparedness at all levels while decentralizing more responsibilities to the local authorities; integrating disaster risk reduction within and across sectors, especially in the industry sector, special economic zones and specific economic zones; mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into the planning of management and utilization of natural resources and environment particularly in planning of utilization of land, forest and water resources in order to help prevent and reduce natural disaster risks and force; raising awareness and understanding of the entire society on disaster risk reduction so as to create a culture of safety and resilience to disasters while focusing on strengthening preparedness for emergency response at all levels.

These targets will not be achieved without cooperation and support from the international community. Taking this opportunity, I would like to, on behalf of the Lao Government, extend our sincere gratitude to the international community for the continued support and cooperation rendered to the Lao PDR.

Let me conclude by wishing the conference a great success.

Thank you.