

**Statement by
H.E. Mr. Krerkpan Roekchamnong
Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative of Thailand
to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva
at the 1st PrepCom for the 3rd World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction,
14-15 July 2014, Palais des Nations, Geneva**

Co-Chairs,

Thailand associates itself with the statement by ASEAN as delivered by Myanmar. Permit me at the outset to also congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau upon your election.

We are meeting at a crucial juncture. While we are forming a new development agenda beyond 2015, we are also seeking to conclude a new legal framework to succeed the Kyoto Protocol in addressing climate change by 2015. At the same time, we are here to discuss the new global framework to succeed the Hyogo Framework for Action or HFA. It is important that we adopt a coherent approach. Disaster risk reduction or DRR and preparedness should be part of the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda and the new climate change legal framework.

This first Prep Com for the 3rd World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction is therefore a timely opportunity for Member States and all stakeholders to engage in discussions that will help shape the new global framework to be adopted in Sendai next year.

As part of the global process, during 24-26 June 2014, Thailand, in close cooperation with UNISDR and partners, hosted the 6th Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR) in Bangkok.

The Conference was attended by more than 4,000 participants who took part in over 120 meeting and activities. Representatives of more than 50 countries and regional groupings attended the High Level Round Table, including 19 ministerial representatives.

The key outcome document, the Bangkok Declaration on Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia and the Pacific 2014, calls on Governments and stakeholders to

enhance resilience at the local level, improve public investments for disaster and climate risk management, strengthen public and private partnership for DRR, promote the use and development of science, technology and innovation for DRR, enhance DRR governance, contribute to and fully support the global deliberations on HFA2 and build coherence between HFA2 and the concurrent process on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and climate change arrangement.

Governments and stakeholders finalized the Asia-Pacific input document for HFA2, which had gone through multi-stakeholders consultations over the past two years. The document puts forward detailed recommendations in nine important areas¹ for HFA2. The conference also welcomed Voluntary Commitment Statements on DRR made by ten stakeholders groups².

The Bangkok Declaration, together with the Asia-Pacific input document for HFA2 and the Voluntary Commitment Statements of the stakeholders groups reflect our regional priorities and provide recommendations for HFA2 discussion.

Co-Chairs,

I wish to elaborate on several key points that Thailand attaches great importance to and recommends for HFA2.

First, disasters can unravel sustainable development and poverty eradication. Political commitment is key to DRR policy and effective implementation, especially with regard to national plans and budget allocations for early warning, education and public awareness.

¹ (1) Develop and implement strategies for integration of disaster risk reduction, response to climate change and sustainable development; (2) Prevent and reduce risks; (3) Strengthen risk information and knowledge; (4) Partner with the private sector to prevent and reduce risks; (5) Strengthen local level action; (6) Ensure social inclusion; (7) Strengthen measures for achieving resilience to disasters; (8) Strengthen the role of women and; (9) Enhance risk governance and accountability.

² (1) Parliamentarians; (2) Individuals and organizations concerned with disability; (3) Asia-pacific stakeholder group on gender equality and women's empowerment in disaster risk management and regional resilience building; (4) Science, technology and academia; (5) Children, youth and child-centered organizations; (6) Asian civil society organizations; (7) Media; (8) National societies of red cross and red crescent – IFRC; (9) Private sector and; (10) Mayors/ local government authorities

In the case of Thailand, the lessons from the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami has taught us that DRR is crucial. The HFA, which was adopted only a few weeks after the 2004 Tsunami, has become an important guideline and framework on disaster risk reduction and disaster management for countries around the world, including Thailand. One of the important areas that we have prioritized is identifying, assessing and monitoring disaster risks and enhancing early warning.

After the tsunami, we took immediate action to establish a National Disaster Early Warning Centre, with new satellite technology and created a tsunami evacuation system with alarm towers along the coast, augmented by radio, television and text message warning systems.

Thailand's efforts regarding tsunami preparedness also extend beyond our borders. In 2005, we contributed US\$10 million to establish the ESCAP Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Tsunami, Disaster and Climate Preparedness in the Indian Ocean and South East Asia Countries. Projects approved by the Fund cover a number of aspects of early warning, including monitoring and warning services in lower capacity countries, community preparedness planning and education materials. This Trust Fund is instrumental in helping disaster prone countries in the region to build national capacity in disaster risk reduction.

Second, the impact of disasters is felt most at the community level, thus building local resilience is crucial. By promoting leadership at the community level, raising awareness and providing necessary supports to build local capacity, we can create a stronger sense of DRR ownership and build resilience at the community level. We also encourage the exchange of knowledge, best practices and experiences in this regard.

Third, disasters have a severe impact on economic development including the disruption of supply chain within and beyond the region. As part of the inclusive process, we need to encourage and engage the private sector's role in DRR. The 2011 floods in Thailand not only led to more than USD 46.5 billion in damages and losses to the Thai economy, 90 per cent of which was borne by the private sector. The floods also had a knock-on effect on the world economy, as many of our industries are integrated into the global supply chains. This experience clearly demonstrates the importance of Business Continuity Management and catastrophe insurance for our business sector.

Fourth, DRR planning and policy should be inclusive and adopt a multi-stakeholder approach, involving peoples and organizations at all levels. Governments alone can only do so much. It cannot and should not be expected to do everything by itself. Governments must reach out and engage with the various stakeholders, including the private sector, civil society and local community organizations. The special needs of different social groups, including women, children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities, should be adequately addressed.

Fifth, we must enhance the means of implementation, especially international cooperation and partnership among countries and all stakeholders both at the regional and global levels to address capacity gaps. Partnerships in the areas of capacity building, financial resources and science, technology and innovation should be emphasized. Without such partnerships, it would be difficult to achieve a safer and more resilient world as many countries have the will, but not the means to enhance DRR.

In closing, may I reiterate Thailand's support for increased international cooperation for disaster risk reduction, as well as for a stronger people-centred approach and preparedness efforts that will contribute to the sustainable development of our countries. To this end, we look forward to participating actively in the preparatory process leading up to World Conference in Sendai and beyond.

Thank you.