

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MEHMET FERDEN ÇARIKÇI,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
TO THE UN OFFICE AT GENEVA
AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS IN SWITZERLAND
FIRST PREPARATORY COMMITTEE OF THE
3RD WORLD CONFERENCE ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION
14-15 JULY 2014, GENEVA**

Mr. Chair,
Distinguished participants,

I thank all those who are involved in this process.

The full version of my statement will be conveyed to the Secretariat for publication.

In the last decade, DRR has been one of my Government's top priorities. We believe that, efforts targeting DRR do not only save lives in case of natural disasters, but they also help a nation achieve development goals in the long run. It should be a well-known fact that DRR is cheaper than responding to a disaster.

DRR is not a strategy that can be established overnight, that's why our Government's Disaster and Emergency Management Authority, namely AFAD, has developed and started to implement four closely inter-related national strategic and action plans building our road map until 2023.

These plans are:

- National Earthquake Strategy and Action Plan (2013-2023)
- National Climate Change Strategy
- AFAD Strategic Plan (2013-2017)
- Turkey Disaster Response Plan

We allocated a remarkable amount of resources to projects aiming to determine the natural and man-made risks threatening our nation and increased our focus on how to manage those risks.

Turkey has taken significant steps in this field with the establishment of the Turkish Disaster Data Bank and the development of the Disaster Risk Modeling project. The Turkish Disaster Data Bank demonstrates Turkey's disaster vulnerability. Based on this, we shall develop a robust strategy for risks that may occur in the future by taking historical risks into consideration. Furthermore, we initiated the Disaster Risk Modeling Project in early 2014, and we shall perform predictions of probable disasters with mathematical models, and we will achieve the first project output in late 2014.

I also would like to express that we share our knowledge and experience through regional cooperation.

Turkey is the “chair” of the European Forum for DRR Working Group on Governance and Accountability. We will chair the whole Forum in 2017. We aim to contribute to the post-2015 process in the short term by analyzing the “DRR Governance and Accountability Report” for the HFA process. Moreover, AFAD has assumed the task of being the “Country Coordinator” of the “Working Group on Cooperation in Emergency Assistance” and the “Working Group on Experts on Seismic Risks” under the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC).

Our specific contribution to the Sendai Conference will be on school safety. Turkey is leading a project called “Celebrating HFA Achievement on School Safety” with the UNISDR, which will be presented at the Conference.

One of the main outcomes of the project will be the capacity increase in building school resilience to disasters for South Eastern European countries. Turkey will hold the kick-off meeting of the project in September in İstanbul with the participation of Ministers of 15 countries that are leaders in their region in the field of school safety. Our commitment to implement the “School Safety Project” through the pilot project/case study called “39 districts 39 schools” to be conducted in Istanbul was presented in Milan during the Ministerial Conference last week.

We appreciate the progress initiated by the HFA process and believe that the discussions on the HFA2 will help us take stock of our achievements; see the areas which need more focus and stronger efforts. After shaping the HFA2, we should not forget the lessons taught to us by the HFA and it should always shed light to our efforts.

While discussing the HFA2, we should be able to design mechanisms with a view to providing greater endorsement and wider implementation. We should consider establishing efficient, flexible and user-friendly measures, which would in the end motivate implementation of HFA2 at the local, national and regional levels. We should refrain from drawing frameworks which will not suit to all regions or all types of disasters.

DRR efforts should not be expected only from the authorities. Each individual, each member of a family, each employer should be encouraged to take the necessary measures to protect themselves, their loved ones and their investments against a disaster. We should accept the responsibility of helping everyone how to determine the risks and reducing them.

While thinking about how we can convince everyone to prepare themselves for a disaster which hopefully may in the end never happen, we should not hesitate to show them the imminent risks and threats they are about to face.

One of the most important components of DRR efforts is to raise awareness in our societies. Children are the most effective group for long term awareness-raising in mitigation efforts. We have launched a campaign called the Disaster-Prepared Turkey Training and Awareness-Raising Program. The campaign consists of four main pillars:

- i. Disaster Prepared Family,
- ii. Disaster Prepared Business,
- iii. Disaster Prepared Youth,
- iv. Disaster Prepared School.

We aim to create disaster awareness through training programs designed for various age groups.

When trying to increase resilience at the local level, we should first determine the already existing capacity, be it the private sector or the civil society. This would help us increase local ownership, promote international solidarity and reduce costs of the projects.

Global humanitarian funds are already over-stretched with several L3 crises around the world. As we see the DRR expenditures as investments instead of humanitarian assistance, we believe that they have to be shouldered by the development actors. The HFA2 should encourage projects which would be funded by global financial institutions.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate our commitment to continue to cooperate with the UNISDR to promote the implementation of HFA2. We also attach utmost importance to the outcomes of the Sendai Conference, as they will definitely impact upon the World Humanitarian Summit in İstanbul.

Thank you.