

Excellency, Honorable guests, distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen,

I am feeling much honored to organize the trainers training program on community based hazard map development for affected areas by Indian Ocean Tsunami in such a beautiful city, Chennai with His Excellency, the Governor of Tamil Nadu, Thiru Surjit Singh Barnala in presence.

This program is excellently and beautifully prepared and organized with the full commitment and support of National Disaster Management Authority of India with the strong leadership of His Excellency of Professor N. Vinod Chandra Menon who is the Honorable Member of National Disaster Management Authority.

And we received the substantial and technical support from Professor Dr. Viswanathan, Vice Chancellor, Anna University, Chennai.

Please allow me to take this opportunity to extend my sincerely gratitude to Dr. Anil Sinha who is one of my best friends in Kobe, UNDP officer and the head of the Secretariat of the International Recovery Platform, United Nations in Kobe for his generous support to prepare this program.

Asian Disaster Reduction Center has been established in 1998 in Kobe after the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake, ADRC has been received with financial and technical support from the 25 member countries in Asia. Government of India has been the member of ADRC from the establishment. ADRC has been committed itself in enhancing the capacity of disaster risk reduction of the countries in Asia.

We had a devastating Tsunami Disaster on 26th of December 2004. This program was originally planned and developed by Asian Disaster Reduction Center based on the report of multi-national mission to Tsunami affected areas including Chennai in April 2005. Asian Disaster Reduction Center led the mission and made substantial contribution to compile the report with recommendation.

It is said in the report that in order to make the community more resilient to disaster, the community based disaster risk reduction including raising public awareness is very effective. To make the community more resilient to disasters, public support by the government alone is not enough. Individual involvement in disaster risk reduction and mutual help in the community are also critical for that.

In this context the participants are expected to learn the town watching method developed by Dr.Ogawa and Asian Disaster Reduction Center. This method is quite effective to raise the public awareness of the community on various types of natural hazards such as tsunami, storm surge, flood, earthquake, cyclone etc.

In the program, participants of the local government officers with responsibility for disaster management will learn the basic knowledge of natural hazards and methodology to raise public awareness of the community on natural hazard. After the program, the participants having a skill to develop hazard map could provide with their skill to other local officer, NGOs and their community leaders.

Finally on behalf of the organizers I would like to extend our sincere gratitude to the financial support from UN/ESCAP for this program.

Thank you very much for your attention.