



ADRC Highlights

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➤ **The International Forum on Tsunami and Earthquake held in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan on 15-16 January 2007**

The International Forum on Tsunami and Earthquake - progress of the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) and Recovery from Tsunami and Earthquake, took place in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan, on 15-16 January 2007. The Forum was hosted by the International Recovery Platform (IRP) Secretariat, the Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC), the Government of Japan, and Hyogo Prefecture in partnership with the Governments of Switzerland and Italy, UN/ISDR, UNDP, UN/OCHA, ILO, the World Bank, IFRC and UN-HABITAT. The forum was attended by about 300 participants from 34 countries and 20 international organizations, and was comprised of dignitaries, national and local officials, experts on disaster reduction and recovery, and other stakeholders.

The Public Symposium on 15 January began with opening remarks from H.E. Mr. Kensei Mizote, Minister of State for Disaster Management, H.E. Mr. Takeshi Iwaya, Senior Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Toshizo Ido, Governor, Hyogo Prefecture, Mr. John Ohiorhenuan, Deputy Assistant Administrator and Senior Deputy Director, UNDP/BCPR, and Mr. Sálvano Briceño, Director, UN/ISDR. This was followed by a video message from Mr. Bill Clinton, former President of the United States and Special Envoy to UN Secretary General for Tsunami Recovery, in which he emphasized the importance of recovery as a unique opportunity for better rebuilding.

In the keynote speech, Ms. Maryvonne Plessis-Fraissard, Advisor of the World Bank Group, acknowledged that understanding development and risk has been a long learning process, as the World Bank has long devoted a large and growing portion of its development activities to reconstruction, with issues of prevention having only come into the spotlight more recently.

In the session devoted to Tsunami Recovery Status Reports, H.E. Mr. Kusmayanto Kadiman (Minister for Research and Technology, Indonesia), H.E. Mahinda Samarasinghe (Minister of Disaster Management and Human Rights, Sri Lanka), H.E. Mauroof Jameel (Minister of Construction and Public Infrastructure, Maldives) and Prof. N.V.C. Menon (Member of National Disaster Management Authority, India) made presentations outlining their countries' experiences, key achievements and lessons learned from recent tsunami and earthquake events, and highlighting various measures for reform

in the arena of disaster risk reduction, including recovery.

Mr. Patricio Bernal, Executive Secretary of the Inter-governmental Oceanographic Commission and Assistant Director-General of UNESCO gave presentations informing participants about the status and progress being made on the Indian Ocean Tsunami Early Warning and Mitigation System.



Next, a panel discussion was held to discuss the progress of the implementation of the HFA for better recovery. Mr. Marco Ferrari, Deputy Head of the Department of Humanitarian Aid of the Swiss Agency for Development and Coordination initiated the panel

discussion with a speech highlighting the importance of building international systems for disaster risk reduction and the sustained international support for the system, including that of the IRP.

In the experts meeting held on 16 January, representatives from Pakistan and Thailand presented reports on their ongoing recovery efforts. In the keynote speech, Prof. Ian Davis, Cranfield University, UK, made a presentation on "Learning from Disaster Recovery" based on an evidence-based study conducted with the cooperation and support of the IRP. These were followed by thematic sessions in the form of group discussions on the topics of housing, livelihood and organizational and institutional arrangements, led by UN-HABITAT, ILO and UNDP, respectively.

The Forum concluded with the adoption and release of the Kobe Communiqué, the outcome document highlighting the importance of advancing international cooperation in disaster risk reduction, promoting "rebuild better" principles, and addressing issues of governance, institutional arrangements, education, and local culture in the recovery process. For further details, please visit the IRP website (<http://recoveryplatform.org/>) or contact the IRP Secretariat at irp@recoveryplatform.org.

➤ **Announcement**

The Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction 2007 (ACDR 2007) will be hosted by the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan in Astana, Kazakhstan on 25-27 June 2007. ACDR 2007 aims to further review the progress made since the adoption of the HFA at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in 2005, identify the challenges being faced, and promote the implementation of disaster risk reduction with a view to ensuring sustainable social and economic development in the region. Please contact the Conference Secretariat (acdr2007astana@adrc.or.jp) for more information.