

Opening Ceremony



Opening Remarks by Mr. Won-Kyong Moon
Administrator, National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)
Republic of Korea



Congratulatory Address by Mr. Kakazu Chiken
Senior Vice Minister, Cabinet Office, Japan



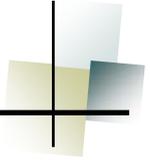
Delivery of a message from Mr. Michael Jarraud,
WMO Secretary General by Ms. Haleh Kootval,
Chief of the Public Weather Services and
Applications Programme Department



Keynote Speech by Mr. Salvano Briceno,
Director, UN/ISDR



Keynote Speech by Mr. Masayuki Kitamoto,
Executive Director, ADRC



◆ Opening Remarks

ACDR 2006 officially began with the opening remarks of **Administrator Won-Kyong Moon of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) of the Republic of Korea**, the host country. Administrator Moon welcomed the participants with expressed appreciation for the attendance. He cited the work of the ADRC in promoting discussions and information sharing as well as international cooperation and coordination in disaster risk reduction. He also cited the importance of the conference as it aims to review the progress made by countries in line with the implementation of the Hyogo Framework of Action. Mr. Moon conveyed his sympathy to the victims of the Indian Ocean Tsunami and expressed hope that through the unified strength of countries and the guidance of the HFA, the problem of disasters could eventually be overcome and the vision of a safer global village is attainable.

◆ Congratulatory Addresses

On behalf of the **Government of Japan, Honorable Senior Vice Minister Chiken Kakazu**, congratulated and gratefully appreciated the Government of the Republic of Korea, as host, and the Asian Disaster Reduction Center, the United Nations Inter-Agency Secretariat of the ISDR, and the World Meteorological Organization, as co-organizers. Citing recent disaster events, the Minister underscored the importance of each country's work on disaster risk reduction, particularly in reducing social vulnerabilities to natural hazards, towards building a sustainable and safe society. He considered the conference as an important opportunity for the HFA to be implemented in every country. Lastly, Minister Kakazu conveyed the value of disaster risk reduction as an appropriate area for international cooperation and the value of this conference in

helping the participating countries improve their respective capacities through shared and applied information and technical knowledge.

Ms. Haleh Kootval, chief of the Public Weather Services and Applications Programme Department delivered **a message from Mr. Michael Jarraud, WMO Secretary General**. The message affirmed that the development and integration of risk knowledge and early warning systems as an integral component of disaster risk management activities could reduce considerably the loss of human life and socio-economic damages caused by natural hazards. Thus, established and improved early warning systems and the application of relevant and available technologies could prevent natural hazards from translating into disasters. WMO, it was stated, is deeply committed to advancing the HFA, particularly the second priority area of identifying, assessing and monitoring disaster risks and enhancing early warning systems. WMO promotes the establishment of multi-hazard early warning systems, the strengthening of linkages among national and local authorities and early warning agencies, and strategic partnerships at international and regional levels along this HFA priority area for action.

Opening Remarks

Mr. Moon Won-Kyong

Administrator, National Emergency Management Agency, Republic of Korea

Your excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen.

Good morning,

I am Moon Won-Kyong, Administrator of the National Emergency Management Agency of the Republic of Korea. I would like to express my deepest appreciation for your attendance, and I warmly welcome all the participants and guests.

ADRC has been working enthusiastically through discussions and information sharing to make solutions to establish a safer global village from disasters. With the active support of our member countries, we could establish IRP to make international cooperation and coordination in disaster response and reconstruction. I believe that we can step forward to the base of worldwide disaster response network when we gather our strength to mitigate disasters.

Today, we are here again to bear the fruits of our hope that we have brought up together.

The Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction 2006 now officially begins one year after the WCDR last year in Kobe, aiming to review the progress made, identify challenges, and promote the implementation of disaster risk reduction in the context of the Hyogo Framework for Action with a view to ensuring sustainable social and economic development in the Asian region.

Today, it is our pleasure to have many experts such as policy makers and academics from member and advisory countries of ADRC, delegates from international organizations including UN/ISDR and WMO, and NGOs. Through this three-day conference in Seoul, various presentations and concentrated discussions on the topics of disaster reduction are expected.

Before our sorrow from the tremendous damage by Tsunami on the Indian Ocean rim has been relieved, many Asian countries were again hit by large scale disasters. I would like to extend my heartfelt sorrow and sympathy to the victims of disasters.

I believe that disasters should be overcome with our unified strength. It is the pride of ADRC as an open regional community that member countries are actively leading and participating in the disaster reduction activities.

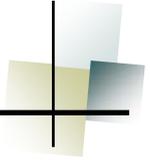
I would sincerely hope that the discussion on the two major themes, "Review of the current status of the implementation of the disaster risk reduction" and "Towards the provision of relevant guidelines and tools to assist the implementation of disaster risk reduction in the context of the Hyogo Framework for Action in the Asian region" bring forth fruitful results to lead the 'construction of a safer global village from disaster damages'.

Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to wish this conference will be able to add meaningful values and effectiveness to the on-going activities based on closer collaboration between our member countries.

Finally, I sincerely hope that this conference will create additional momentum for building more effective disaster management system as we move to the next stage.

Thank you for your kind attention.



Congratulatory Address

Mr. Chiken Kakazu
Senior Vice-Minister of Cabinet Office, Japan

Mr. Moon Won Kyong, Administrator of National Emergency Management Agency, the Republic of Korea,

Mr. Salvano Briceno, Director of United Nations Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

Distinguished representatives of countries and participants,

I am greatly honored to address my sincere congratulations on this occasion of the Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction 2006 with such a large attendance of representatives from member countries of the Asian Disaster Reduction Center, international organizations, and others. I would also like to express my deepest appreciation for their dedicated efforts to the Government of the Republic of Korea, as the host country, as well as the Conference organizers including Asian Disaster Reduction Center, United Nations Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, and World Meteorological Organization.

More than one hundred thousand people fell victim to the Indian Ocean Tsunami occurred in December 2004. Thereafter, a number of natural disasters all around the world, such as Hurricane Katrina in the United States, a massive earthquake in South Asia, landslides in Indonesia and the Philippines have claimed precious lives and properties. We must live with risk of natural threats. However, by reducing social vulnerability toward natural disasters, we will be able to reduce the damages. In order to protect the people's lives, health and property, and to build a sustainable and safe society, each country needs to make proactive efforts for disaster reduction, occasionally, in collaboration with international organizations and other countries.

I understand that this Conference is aimed at ensuring follow-up activities of the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), which was adopted at the United Nations World Conference on Disaster Reduction held in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan in January 2005, and it will review the current status of the countries and share effective ideas and methods for further promotion of the implementation of HFA. I believe this is a very important opportunity for the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) to be implemented in each country, and greatly expect your active and frank discussion in the sessions.

I think that disaster reduction, as an administrative domain, is a very suitable area for international cooperation because it aims at a universal goal of protecting people's lives, and it stems from natural disasters. When one country prepares for future disasters or takes measures for disaster mitigation at normal time, it can improve its capacity for disaster risk management effectively by making utilization of other countries' information and know-how, and international organizations' frameworks. I hope the Conference, as well as efforts by international organizations including Asian Disaster Reduction Center may serve as help for each country's implementation.

Finally, I would like to express my deepest respects and gratitude to you, who address the day-to-day challenges of natural disasters. I would like to conclude my remark by wishing discussions and information shared in this Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction 2006 will be effectively utilized in your activities, your efforts will make further progress, and disaster damage will be reduced in the Asian region.

Thank you.

Congratulatory Statement

Michel Jarraud
Secretary-General, World Meteorological organization

Distinguished Delegates, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the World Meteorological Organization(WMO), I wish to express our appreciation for the opportunity to address the Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction(ACDR).WMO is grateful to the Government and people of Republic of Korea for hosting this Conference, as well as for their hospitality and commitment to disaster reduction. I also would like to extend our deep appreciation to Asian Disaster Reduction Centre for organizing and to the Government of Japan for supporting this Conference.

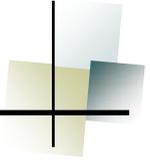
Every year, disasters caused by a wide range of hazards impact many communities around the world, leading to loss of human lives, destruction of social and economic infrastructure, and degradation of the already fragile ecosystems. About 90% of these disasters are of hydro-meteorological origin. When disasters occur, they significantly set back national development in terms of health, food security, and socio-economic growth by years, if not decades. This effect is especially severe on the less developing countries who suffer the greater relative losses in terms of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Recent statistics by the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED, University of Louvain, 2004) indicate that during the decade 1994-2003, more than 255 million people were affected on average by natural disasters each year. During the same period, disasters claimed nearly 600,000 lives and economic cost of over 250 billion USD. Some of these episodes are quite fresh in our minds, such as the tragic Indian Ocean Tsunami of 26 December 2004 and the destructive mudslides that occurred in the eastern Philippines just a few weeks ago.

During the Second World Conference on Disaster Reduction (Kobe, Hyogo, Japan, 18-22 January 2005), 168 countries adopted the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 and identified five high priority areas of action for disaster risk reduction. Furthermore, the Hyogo Framework for Action stresses that disaster risk management must be addressed with an integrated and multi-hazard approach.

Following the Second World Conference on Disaster Reduction, at the 2005 United Nations World Summit (New York, September 2005), Governments requested the establishment of worldwide early warning systems for all natural hazards, building on existing national and regional capacities to complement broader disaster preparedness and mitigation initiatives.

Actions can indeed be taken to reduce considerably the loss of life and socio-economic damages caused by natural hazards, through the development and integration of risk knowledge and early warning systems (EWS) as an integral component of disaster risk management activities. Over the last decades, while the loss of life and economic damage figures have been quite high, it is most important to stress that they would have been much higher without all the pre-disaster efforts made and, particularly, without the existing early warning systems. Therefore, all the relevant technologies, expertise, capacities and experiences that were available have permitted us to prevent many other natural hazards from becoming natural disasters. With a deep commitment to advancing Hyogo Framework for Action, WMO is taking actions regarding the second high priority area, namely "identifying, assessing and monitoring disaster risks and enhancing early warnings" as an integral component of disaster risk management.



A fundamental precondition for national disaster preparedness is the availability of well-functioning “end-to-end” early warning systems, in order to deliver accurate information in a timely manner to the authorities, risk managers and the population at risk.

National Meteorological and Hydrological Services are organizations that operate 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and are responsible for the issuance of around-the-clock early warnings for a wide range of hazards such as tornadoes, tropical cyclones, storm surges, floods, droughts, heat waves and severe storms. Currently, nearly 60 National Meteorological and Hydrological Services in the world also have their governments’ mandate to provide seismic and/or tsunami early warnings. However, the capabilities and resources of the National Meteorological and Hydrological Services significantly vary from country to country. By designating appropriate resources to these organizations and strengthening their link to the risk management authorities, we can be even more effective and save more lives.

Through its internationally coordinated network of National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) of its 187 Members, 10 International Programmes, three Global Meteorological Centers and 40 Regional Specialized Meteorological Centres, the World Meteorological organization (WMO) has developed a global operational systems for observing, monitoring, detecting, forecasting and providing operational early warnings for weather-, climate- and water-related hazards. These efforts have led to significant progress in different aspects of EWS, although many major challenges still remain ahead.

It is essential that EWS can be made available for all hazards, while ensuring operational efficiency, cost effectiveness and sustainability of these systems over extensive periods of time. Since development and sustainability of hazard-specific EWS can be both costly and resource intensive, a multi-hazard approach is often the best available option, by building on the existing EWS technical and organizational capacities and by combining the infrastructures of various partners, through positive synergies.

However, a number of challenges on the legislative, financial, organizational, technical, operational, training and capacity building aspects of EWS still remain to be met, before we can ensure that they will indeed be implemented as an integral part of disaster risk reduction strategies within a multi-hazard framework. These challenges have to be defined and prioritized, and clear follow-up actions will need to be identified and implemented, through close strategic partnerships at international, regional and national levels. Following this Conference, WMO in close partnerships with several other agencies will convene a two-day multi-disciplinary Expert’s Symposium on “Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems for Integrated Disaster Risk Management”, to be held at WMO Headquarters in Geneva from 23-24 May 2006. WMO’s Symposium will convene nearly 80 multi-disciplinary experts and representatives, to recommend concrete actions and to focus on solutions for the establishment of multi-hazard EWS in all countries, especially in those with least resources.

With a deep commitment to disaster Prevention and Mitigation, WMO’s fourteenth Congress in May 2003 established its Natural Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Programme as a major cross cutting Programme with the goals to:

1. Promote and facilitate disaster preventive and mitigation strategies
2. Enhance disaster prevention and mitigation capacities through better integration of WMO’s scientific and technical capabilities, particularly related to hydro-meteorological hazard assessment and early warnings, in the disaster risk management decision process,
3. Strengthen the capacities of National Meteorological and Hydrological Services as a critical component for national disaster reduction, particularly in the developing countries
4. Strengthen partnerships between our scientific and technical communities with disaster risk management to bridge the gap between technical and decision-making aspects of disaster risk management.

To this end, WMO has developed a strategic plan involving:

- 1) Implement concrete regional and country level projects based on systematic prioritisation of regional gaps and needs related to capacity building for hazard analysis and mapping and multi-hazard approach to early warning systems for Integrated Disaster Management. Furthermore, a programme is being developed for strengthening capacities of National Meteorological and Hydrological Services in support of post-disaster Emergency Response activities.
- 2) Education, training and public outreach of NMHSs and their stakeholders, namely Authorities, disaster risk management agencies, Media,
- 3) Documenting of good practices and enhanced information sharing
- 4) Advocacy
- 5) Coordinated fund-raising to support the regional and country projects

WMO Members will benefit from these activities through enhanced deliverables and services of their National Meteorological and Hydrological Services of their countries. The implementation of this plan involves effective coordination among WMO's programmes and strategic partnerships with other Members of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction system such as ISDR, OCHA, IFRC, UNDP, and the Asian Disaster Reduction Centre that complement our activities in disaster risk management. Within this context, an outstanding opportunity to develop partnerships among key agencies at national and regional levels for advancing the HFA in Asia will be provided through this important Conference.

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, before closing, I wish thank you again for your attention. Your presence here is a testimony to your deep commitment to the area of disaster risk reduction. Let us work together towards a safer world and prevent the occurrence of these tragic disasters in the future.