

History of Establishment of ADRC

1990s: International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR)

At its 42nd General Assembly in December 1987, the United Nations (UN) designated the 1990s as the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR). It adopted a resolution aiming to sharply reduce the damage caused by natural disasters around the world, particularly in developing countries, through joint international action.

1994: World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction

In May 1994, the UN held the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction in Yokohama, Japan, to conduct an interim review of the decade-long IDNDR initiative and to propose an action plan for the future. At the meeting, the “Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World” was adopted, highlighting the importance of international cooperation in regions that share common types of disasters and disaster reduction measures. Since then, disaster reduction activities have been promoted throughout the world based on this strategy.

1995: Ministerial-level Asian Natural Disaster Reduction Conference

As the first step toward regional cooperation under the Yokohama Strategy, the IDNDR Secretariat organized a meeting in Kobe in December 1995 to formulate a policy on disaster reduction cooperation in Asia. Cabinet members in charge of disaster reduction from 28 countries attended the meeting, which concluded with the adoption of the Kobe Disaster Reduction Declaration. This declaration consists of ideas for promoting international cooperation in disaster reduction, including a Japanese proposal to launch a feasibility study on a system for coordinating disaster reduction efforts in the Asian region.

1996: Asian Natural Disaster Reduction Experts Meeting

The Government of Japan and the IDNDR Secretariat jointly organized an expert meeting in October 1996 to thresh out how a central disaster reduction system, as stated in the Kobe Disaster Reduction Declaration, might be created for the Asian region. The meeting was attended by key personnel in the disaster reduction bureaus of 30 countries, and they agreed

to study the creation of the tentatively named “Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC)” to serve as a secretariat for promoting activities under the proposed system.

1997: Asian Disaster Reduction Cooperation Promotion Meeting

Again, the Government of Japan and the IDNDR Secretariat jointly organized a meeting in Tokyo in June 1997 to discuss activities to be undertaken by the proposed center for disaster reduction system. Likewise, the key personnel from the disaster reduction bureaus of 23 countries attended the meeting with an overall goal of promoting cooperation in disaster reduction efforts through specific actions. A proposal was made at the meeting to establish a center in Japan to serve as the secretariat for the proposed system.

1998: Establishment of ADRC

Gaining momentum from these series of meetings, the Government of Japan discussed the organization, budget, and other aspects of the proposed office with the other countries involved. With the cooperation of Hyogo Prefecture, ADRC was officially established in Kobe on 30 July 1998.