

Statement of Mr. Marwan Jilani, IFRC Head of Country Cluster Support Team and Representative to the UN in Bangkok.

Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development – Bangkok 3-5 April 2016

Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for giving the IFRC the opportunity to speak at this important session of the APFSD.

As highlighted by the ES of ESCAP, this region has made significant achievements during the past decade including providing greater access to health, education and greater economic opportunities, as well as lifting many from poverty. However, many sustainable development challenges remain to be addressed and the Agenda 2030 represents an important opportunity to address these challenges and build on achievements thus far with deeper and broader impacts, achieving sustainable development goals for all.

Leaving no one behind and reaching first those furthest behind, is such a critical principle for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, particularly for this region. Leaving no one behind means that no goal should be considered met unless it is met for every group, especially the most vulnerable. Following the adoption of The 2030 Agenda, UN Secretary General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon stated that “This is the people’s agenda, a plan of action for ending poverty in all its dimensions, irreversibly, everywhere, and leaving no one behind”.

Mr. Chairman,

Please allow me to highlight the following three points:

1. First; The need to adopt a holistic approach toward the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Linking and integrating the outcomes of the Sendai Framework and the Paris Agreement is critical toward the comprehensive and universal implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

In this context, disasters pose a significant challenge for sustainable development, driving poverty and inequality. We have witnessed in this region how disasters have wiped out years of development gains in many vulnerable communities. Natural hazards disproportionately affect the poorest and most vulnerable communities. The SDGs recognize that building resilience is critical to sustainable development, most notably in the goal on Ending Poverty. Therefore, investing in disaster risk management measures is cost effective since these investments reduce losses when disasters strike and produce a large number of development and humanitarian benefits that pay off even before disasters strike. This is because investing in resilience encourages households to save and build productive assets, promotes entrepreneurship, and stimulates firms to invest and innovate.

2. Second: resilience spans the continuum between development and humanitarian work and can support governments to adopt effective, holistic and well-rounded approaches. As

many speakers have already highlighted, development efforts should be screened for climate and disaster risk, and integrate appropriate resilience measures where risks are identified. Risk is inherent to all development and is increasing with the challenges of climate change, population growth, and rapid urbanization. Estimates show that urban areas are already adding 1.4 million people per week, which could lead to unplanned development in areas exposed to climate and disaster risk, as well as social exclusion.

Building resilience has also to start with and draw upon joint humanitarian - development strategic planning based on: joint analysis of vulnerabilities and risks, focus on the most vulnerable areas and populations; shared objective and priorities, coordinated action and regular monitoring and evaluation.

3. Third: IFRC adopts a gender and diversity approach for understanding who is most vulnerable in each community, recognising that it is the interplay of diversity factors (age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, health status, legal status, migration experience, disability, indigeneity, linguistic status) that intersects with gender factors to create social exclusion. Therefore, addressing social inclusion is another critical component for the achievement of the SDGs and leaving no one behind.

For example, addressing maternal and child health as well as education for girls and boys in humanitarian emergencies guarantees that gains are not lost. Another critical challenge in the achievement of SDG 5 on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, is the high prevalence of gender-based violence in times of emergencies and disasters. IFRC is working to ensure that greater measures are undertaken to safeguard from and prevent GBV in disaster settings.

Finally Mr. Chairman, as many previous speakers highlighted, the design and implementation of the 2030 Agenda is nationally led with the active participation of all stakeholders especially the local communities. In this context, IFRC as the largest humanitarian network is committed to work with the national and local authorities toward the achievement of the SDGs.

I thank you Mt. Chairman.