

**Economic and Social Council**Distr.: General
30 April 2019

Original: English

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific**Seventy-fifth session**

Bangkok, 27–31 May 2019

Item 4 (d) of the provisional agenda*

Review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific: disaster risk reduction**Note verbale dated 23 April 2019 from the Embassy of Mongolia addressed to the secretariat of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific**

The Embassy of Mongolia in Thailand presents its compliments to the secretariat of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and, with reference to the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, which was held in Ulaanbaatar from 3 to 6 July 2018, has the honour to transmit to the secretariat the text of the Outcome of the Asian Ministerial Conference, the Action Plan 2018–2020 of the Asia Regional Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 and the Ulaanbaatar Declaration adopted by the Ministerial Conference.

The Embassy of Mongolia has the further honour to request that the aforementioned documents be brought to the attention of the Commission at its seventy-fifth session under item 4 (d) of the provisional agenda.

The Embassy of Mongolia avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the secretariat of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific the assurances of its highest consideration.

* ESCAP/75/L.1.

Annex to the note verbale dated 23 April 2019 from the Embassy of Mongolia addressed to the secretariat of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific*

Outcome of the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

Overview of Core Outcomes

1. The Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, held every two years, brings together Member States and Intergovernmental Organisations, along with international and national organisations and stakeholder groups, to assess progress in disaster risk reduction. The conference is instrumental in strengthening disaster risk reduction in the region by sharing good practice and knowledge and forging partnerships.

2. The eighth session of this conference, and the second after the adoption of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, was co-hosted by the Government of Mongolia and United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction in Ulaanbaatar, 03-06 July 2018.

3. The Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction 2018 was organised under the overarching theme of ‘Preventing Disaster Risk: Protecting Sustainable Development’ and resulted in the following key outcomes:

- (a) Ulaanbaatar Declaration
- (b) 2018-2020 Action Plan for the Asia Regional Plan for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction
- (c) Voluntary Commitments by Stakeholders.

4. Over 3500 participants from 50 countries and over 1500 organisations participated in the Conference, which featured several substantive sessions and a high-level Asian Leaders Meeting. Governments committed to advancing the disaster risk reduction agenda in the region.

5. Some highlights of the Conference deliberations and outcomes can be summarised as below:

(a) Produced concrete recommendations to achieve target (e) of the Sendai Framework in the Asia Pacific region: The Ulaanbaatar Declaration calls on all governments and all stakeholders to: “urgently accelerate action to develop national and local strategies on disaster risk reduction to reduce disaster losses, thereby achieving Target (e) of the Sendai Framework by 2020.” Each of the six Technical Sessions at the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction had a specific focus on the development of national and local strategies, highlighting challenges and opportunities to accelerate implementation of Target (e). In addition, the Asia Regional Plan 2018-2020 recommends specific actions for the development of national and local strategies.

(b) Advanced regional efforts to promote risk-informed development, particularly as manifested through resilient infrastructure: A featured event at the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk

* The present annex is being issued without formal editing.

Reduction was dedicated to the issue of urban resilience and resilient infrastructure as a means to build on the outcomes of the 2016 Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction and Delhi declaration. The Technical Sessions on investment also focused on risk-informed development as a means of reducing economic losses and building resilient societies. Both the political declaration and the Asia Regional Plan of Action emphasized resilient infrastructure by calling for new public and private investments to be risk-sensitive and for the design innovative solutions for low-cost retrofitting of existing infrastructure.

(c) Advocated for inclusivity and gender-sensitive disaster risk reduction action as a cornerstone of sustainable development. The Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction was designed to support a whole of society approach, inclusive of women, children and youth, older people, and persons with disabilities. It specifically promoted full and equal participation of women in leading gender-sensitive disaster risk reduction activities. In particular, the thematic event on gender and inclusivity highlighted good practices across the region, while a side event on World Tsunami Awareness Day had a focus on the need to “leave no one behind,” calling on communities to take into account the specific needs of the most vulnerable during emergencies.

(d) Provided opportunities for governments and stakeholders to share and learn from good practices in disaster risk reduction in the Asia Pacific region. The practical application of disaster risk reduction was demonstrated through case studies grouped around key themes, including community/local action for resilience; gender and inclusiveness; technology and innovations; social protection and vulnerability reduction; ecosystems-based disaster risk reduction; early warning and early action; and private sector interventions. These sessions were designed to draw out the commonalities of good practices in each of these thematic areas, which will be published and disseminated as a means of promoting knowledge sharing and learning through practical field experiences.

(e) Promoted coherence in implementation: While there has been an increased advocacy for building coherence across international frameworks and agreements, the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction took this discourse forward by committing to “translating coherence of global frameworks into policy and practice to achieve resilience at national and local levels.” Moreover, “Coherence in implementation” was identified as a key policy priority for the region, highlighting the need” to ensure vertical and horizontal policy and programme coordination.”

(f) Local action for resilience: Localising the Sendai Framework was another theme that gained momentum through the Conference. Call was made to bolster community-level actions that strengthen local capacities and foster local leadership, including through resources, incentives and decision-making responsibilities.

6. The Conference ended with a call for greater accountability for disaster losses in the region, and the Government of Australia announced that it will host the next Asian Ministerial Conference in 2020.

Action Plan 2018-2020 of the Asia Regional Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (Sendai Framework) highlights the need “...to guide action at the regional-level through agreed regional and sub-regional strategies...”. In pursuit of this objective, an Asia Regional Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (Asia Regional Plan) was adopted at the 2016 Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction.

The Asia Regional Plan aims to provide: (i) Broad policy direction to guide the implementation of the Sendai Framework in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the region; (ii) long-term road map, outlining a chronological pathway of the Sendai Framework structured around key milestones; and (iii) the Action Plan 2017-2018 with specific activities, prioritized based on the long-term road map and in line with the policy direction.

The Action Plan 2018-2020 follows the goals and directions set in the Asia Regional Plan and analyzes the progress made since its development. It also provides key highlights of the achievements made by the Member States against the milestones agreed for this period, and extends the scope of the two-year Action Plan for the next biennium.

1. Overview

1.1 The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 provides a global blueprint to prevent and reduce disaster risk to achieve resilient and sustainable development. The Sendai Framework lays guiding principles, four priorities for action and seven global targets, and converges with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development on the criticality of risk-sensitive development. Notably, both the 2030 Agenda and the Sendai Framework highlight the importance of building coherence across international agendas and frameworks.

1.2 Since its adoption, the Sendai Framework has been providing a structured approach to Member States and stakeholders to continue to build on their progress made over decades in reducing disaster risk. Throughout the region, countries have made notable achievements in reducing mortality in the case of some hazards.

1.3 Key milestones have been achieved in measuring the impact of disaster risk reduction and building coherence. These include the adoption of the report of the Open-Ended Intergovernmental Expert Working Group on Indicators and Terminology relating to disaster risk reduction by the United Nations General Assembly, and the alignment of the Sendai Framework and Sustainable Development Goal indicators.

1.4 Global mechanisms for coordination and partnerships for disaster risk reduction have been strengthened. The 2017 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction resulted in the Cancun Communique that focused on Ensuring the resilience of infrastructure and housing. The 2018 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development focuses on Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies. These processes have been instrumental in the advancement of knowledge and mutual learning.

1.5 Despite notable efforts in disaster risk reduction, Asia-Pacific continues to account for half of the global disaster impact in terms of frequency, mortality and affected people. During 2016-2017, the region recorded over 500 disasters of a certain magnitude that resulted in the death of over 15,000 people, displaced over 31 million people and affected over 162 million people.

1.6 Importantly, there has been an increase in the frequency and accumulated impact of events at the local-level. The figures cited above do not fully capture such events which are not consistently documented. These localized events are leading to growing vulnerability and inequality across countries and populations. Disaster risk remains disproportionately concentrated in low income households and communities in all economies. Disasters deepen such inequalities and disproportionately affect most at-risk populations, in particular, children, women, persons with disabilities, older persons, displaced and migrant populations and those in vulnerable situations such as the poor and the marginalised.

1.7 Hydro-meteorological hazards, exacerbated by climate change, negatively impact socio-economic development. It is of vital importance to incorporate disaster risk reduction measures into development programmes within and across all sectors including through climate change adaptation.

1.8 The 2016 Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, co-hosted by the Government of India and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, resulted in the Asia Regional Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 to address these and other challenges. The Asia Regional Plan provided broad policy direction to guide implementation of the Sendai Framework, a long-term road map with a set of defined chronological milestones, and a two-year Action Plan with specific activities to be implemented during 2017-2018.

1.9 The current two-year Action Plan 2018-2020, is a main outcome document of the 2018 Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, co-hosted by the Government of Mongolia and United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. It builds on the previous Action Plan, taking into account the progress realized in the achievement of the milestones, and recommends actions to advance implementation of the Asia Regional Plan, with a specific focus on target (e) of the Sendai Framework that calls for development of national and local disaster risk reduction strategies.

2. Implementation of the Asia Regional Plan during 2017-2018: Status, Challenges and Opportunities

The Asia Regional Plan identifies priority regional, national and local activities to enhance exchange of good practice, knowledge and information among governments and stakeholders, and seeks to strengthen regional cooperation to support implementation of the Sendai Framework. The following analysis, structured around the milestones identified for 2016 and 2018 [Box 1], provides a snapshot of the progress achieved in the 2017-2018 Asia Regional Plan of Action.

BOX 1

**ASIA REGIONAL PLAN:
THE MILESTONES****By 2016**

1. Translation and dissemination of key messages and essence of the Sendai Framework in national languages to increase awareness.
2. **All countries** have identified their Sendai Framework focal point.
3. **20 percent** of countries take stock of their current status of disaster risk reduction.
4. The Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction agreed on implementation of the Asia Regional Plan for implementation of the Sendai Framework which was one of the outcomes of the Conference.

By 2018

1. Technical guidance by United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction to national indicators is finalized with a link to Sustainable Development Goal targets and indicators.
2. **50 percent** of countries have prepared a design to establish a national mechanism to collect, analyse and disseminate information on disaster losses and risk aiming to achieve appropriate level of disaggregation for gender, age and disability.
3. **40 percent** of countries have revised/ developed their national strategies and/ or plans for disaster risk reduction in line with the Sendai Target (e).
4. **50 percent** of countries have reviewed their initial progress in implementation of the Sendai Framework through the Sendai Monitor.
5. **40 percent** of countries have established multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder national and local platforms to foster the dialogue and cooperation between governments, science and technology community and other stakeholders for risk-sensitive development and innovative risk management.
6. **10 percent** of countries have developed regulatory or policy frameworks to reinforce risk considerations and risk reduction measures into development initiatives, particularly in the infrastructure sector.

2.1 Most countries in the region have identified a focal point for disaster risk reduction. Some of these focal points have also been designated as the official national coordinator for Sendai Framework Monitoring. United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction has supported this process through releasing a 'Words-into-Action' guideline on National focal points for disaster risk reduction, national platforms for disaster risk reduction, local platforms for disaster risk reduction and Technical guidance for monitoring and reporting on progress in achieving the global targets of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

2.2 Most governments, partner organizations and stakeholders report that they have enhanced disaster risk reduction advocacy and public awareness. The translation of the Sendai Framework and its key messages into national and local languages has helped disseminate disaster risk reduction information to local communities.

2.3 Several countries have established disaster management information systems and emergency operation and coordination centres to improve the collection of loss and damage data. Good practices and lessons from these need to be shared. However, there is a need to improve systematic and disaggregated

collection, analysis and dissemination of disaster risk, and loss and damage data which requires collaboration with multiple ministries and organizations. Further, most countries report facing challenges in collecting data disaggregated by different parameters, such as sex, age and disability.

2.4 The monitoring of the Asia Regional Plan is primarily done through the Sendai Framework Monitoring process. Several countries have conducted baseline assessments to take stock of their current status of disaster risk reduction, while some countries maintain national risk registers. However, the lack of relevant disaster loss data to establish the statistical baseline (2005-2015) for monitoring the Sendai Framework remains a challenge in some countries – both in terms of availability and accuracy of historical data and the limited capacity in its collection.

2.5 The region has succeeded in achieving the milestone of establishing national platforms or other national coordination mechanisms for disaster risk reduction. These coordination mechanisms vary in terms of functionality, frequency of meetings, and engagement of stakeholders. The establishment of local platforms for disaster risk reduction is limited to a few countries, however, where they do exist, a high-level of stakeholder engagement is reported.

2.6 The region has advanced in the development of national disaster risk reduction strategies, plans and policies. However, many of these national strategies and plans were developed during the Hyogo Framework for Action implementation period (2005-2015) and do not integrate key elements of the Sendai Framework; such as preventing new disaster risk, reducing existing risk, and the strengthening of economic, social, health and environmental resilience. Some countries have revised, or are in the process of revising, their existing strategies and plans to be aligned with the Sendai Framework. As yet, very few countries have developed local disaster risk reduction strategies [Box 3 on target (e)].

2.7 Countries in the region have made concrete progress in achieving coherence between development and disaster risk reduction. Most medium- and long-term national development plans integrate disaster risk as a key issue to be addressed for the achievement of sustainable development. In addition, disaster risk reduction strategies and plans have increasingly started reflecting risk-informed development and resilience-building considerations. The integration of selected monitoring indicators of Sustainable Development Goals and the Sendai Framework has helped inform and structure these efforts. The Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific at the regional-level and Joint National Action Plans at the national-level in the Pacific are good examples of integrated disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation plans. Notwithstanding, the lack of high-quality relevant disaster risk data often limits the translation of all these strategies into actionable plans.

2.8 Public and private investment planning are key opportunities for the implementation of risk-informed development. Both sectors have initiated concerted efforts to integrate risk considerations into infrastructure development in terms of new infrastructure and disaster control infrastructure. Efforts have also been undertaken to promote regional cooperation for disaster resilient infrastructure. Risk considerations are increasingly integrated into landuse planning and building codes.

2.9 In this biennium, regional intergovernmental organizations continued to fulfil a critical role in promoting policy coherence and the linkages between disaster risk reduction and development as well as other cross-cutting issues

such as gender mainstreaming and disability inclusion, and steering the focus on enhancing community-based approaches to disaster risk reduction.

2.10 Policy Direction

2.10.1 Coherence in implementation: The adoption of a series of global frameworks and agreements during 2015-2016 provides the international community a unique opportunity to ensure coherence in policy and practice. Resilience-building is at the heart of the global agenda and therefore, it is important that governments, partner organizations and stakeholders ensure mainstreaming and integration of disaster risk reduction and resilience in all sectors. There is a strong need to ensure vertical and horizontal policy and programme coordination.

2.10.2 Local action: The practical application of coherence of the multiple international frameworks is particularly relevant at the level of local implementation. In collaboration with national governments, the capacity of local authorities, local systems and communities to understand, prevent and reduce disaster risk, and prepare for and recover from disasters needs to be strengthened. It is necessary to empower local authorities and local communities, including through resources, incentives and decision-making responsibilities, as appropriate for supporting local leadership.

2.10.3 Gender and inclusiveness in disaster risk reduction: Disaster affect people differently due to varied types and levels of vulnerability. Inequalities in the region are increasing and deepening due to socio-economic factors and compounding disaster impacts. Such inequalities in the development and resilience pathway should be reduced through taking action to promote equitable economic growth, reinforced by a commitment to social inclusion and environmental conservation. “Leave no one behind”, the cornerstone of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, should be the core guiding principle of all disaster risk reduction policies, strategies, plans and actions. A people-centred approach, engaging the most vulnerable, is critical for risk-informed development.

3. Action Plan 2018-2020

The Action Plan 2018-2020 is based on the assessment of progress in the implementation of the Asia Regional Plan. It is in line with the overall policy direction and contributes to the achievement of the milestones in the long-term road map, with a particular focus on milestones set for 2020 [Box 2]. The Action Plan 2018-2020 is founded on recommendations and priorities shared by governments and stakeholders through multiple consultations, including through the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction-Asia Partnership Forums.

BOX 2**ASIA REGIONAL PLAN:
MILESTONES 2020**

1. **All** countries have established methodologies to collect disaster loss data and risk profiles, with gender, age, disability disaggregated data.
2. **All** countries have revised/developed their national strategies and/or plans for disaster risk reduction with increased focus on local actions, achieving Sendai Framework Target (e).
3. **30 percent** of countries have developed regulatory or policy frameworks to reinforce risk considerations and risk reduction measures into development initiatives, in particular in the infrastructure sector.
4. **60 percent** of countries have established multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder national and local platforms.
5. **Review** regional targets under the Asian Regional Plan from 2022-2028, every biennium.

3.1 Priority 1: Understanding disaster risk**3.1.1 Regional Actions**

(a) Promote the development of regional guidelines and tools on disaster risk assessments that are inclusive, comprehensive and address the needs of relevant stakeholders.

(b) Strengthen regional cooperation including through public-private partnerships for the research, development and application of science, technology and innovation for disaster risk reduction, with particular consideration for the needs of those most at-risk, including children, women, persons with disabilities, older persons, displaced and migrant populations and those in vulnerable situations such as the poor and marginalized.

(c) Strengthen regional knowledge exchange, including through forums and mechanisms for data and technology sharing, as well as good practices and lessons, peer-to-peer knowledge-sharing and North-South cooperation, complemented by South-South and triangular cooperation.

(d) Prioritize regional support using technological tools available to transfer and share knowledge among Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries, Small Island Developing States and other countries with special needs.

3.1.2 National and Local Actions

(a) Build capacity of national and local governments and actors to collect and record disaster risk, displacement, damage and loss data, including from at-risk communities living in geographically remote areas, with consistent levels of disaggregation for sex, age and disability.

(b) Strengthen integrated national risk knowledge frameworks and mechanisms to promote the collection, analysis, management, use and dissemination of relevant data and information, using space, in situ and landscape information.

(c) Establish mechanisms to promote dialogue among national and local actors, science and technology communities, the private sector and other stakeholders to share and integrate knowledge, including the sharing and

documentation of successful practices, different forms of partnerships and innovative approaches.

(d) Assess the full spectrum of disaster risk through establishment of appropriate baseline information and comprehensive risk profiles, while capturing increasing magnitude of certain hazards (e.g. dust and sandstorms) and impact in different dimensions (e.g. displacement).

(e) Use existing risk information or conduct new risk assessments with multi-hazard and multi-sectoral coverage, ensuring the complementarities of proven traditional, indigenous and local knowledge and practices, to understand risk and inform national and local disaster risk reduction strategies.

(f) Incorporate disaster risk reduction education at primary, secondary and tertiary levels and professional training, including through partnership with Higher Education Institutions, universities and relevant organizations.

(g) Scale up advocacy and public awareness on disaster risk reduction, including through conducting activities annually to commemorate the International Day for Disaster Reduction (13 October), the World Tsunami Awareness Day (5 November) and regional and national disaster risk reduction days.

3.2 Priority 2: Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk

3.2.1 Regional Actions

(a) Enhance regional cooperation and coordination on disaster risk reduction by strengthening the Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction – the biennial Asian Ministerial Conference, the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction-Asia Partnership Forum and its Secretariat – to ensure more effective implementation and monitoring of the Asia Regional Plan, including through use of the Sendai Framework Monitoring.

(b) Strengthen the role of and cooperation between intergovernmental organizations for policy exchange and development, information and knowledge sharing, and concerted support to national actions.

(c) Enhance the roles of the UN Regional Coordination Mechanism and the UN Development Group, including through collaboration with intergovernmental organizations to support implementation and monitoring of the Sendai Framework in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.

(d) Encourage governments and stakeholder groups to consistently implement, monitor and report on their voluntary commitments to the Asia Regional Plan and the Sendai Framework.

(e) Integrate disaster risk reduction and ecosystem-based approaches to coherently implement the three Rio Conventions on Biodiversity, Climate Change and Desertification, and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance to prevent and reduce the impact of water-related disasters.

(f) Promote and support gender-sensitive and gender-responsive disaster risk reduction actions, including universal access to sexual and reproductive healthcare services.

3.2.2 National and Local Actions

(a) Accelerate actions to achieve target (e) of the Sendai Framework by undertaking actions outlined in Box 3.

BOX 3

Achieving target (e) by 2020

The Sendai Framework identifies development of national and local disaster risk reduction strategies as a top priority, to be accomplished by 2020. Disaster risk reduction strategies and policies define goals and objectives across different timescales and with concrete targets, indicators and time frames. In line with the Sendai Framework, these should be aimed at preventing the creation of disaster risk, the reduction of existing risk and the strengthening of economic, social, health and environmental resilience.

Key prioritized actions to achieve this target can be identified as:

- i. Undertake and regularly update the inventory of available local disaster risk reduction strategies to support achievement of target (e) on “risk-informed local strategies/plans” by 2020.
- ii. Develop and strengthen risk knowledge systems to strengthen disaggregated data collection and analysis of historical and future risk profiles to inform national and local strategies.
- iii. Improve the legal, policy and regulatory environment to enable a whole-of-society approach to the development and implementation of disaster risk reduction strategies.
- iv. Promote coordination across sectors and ministries to streamline data sharing and develop comprehensive strategies, while integrating disaster risk reduction into sectoral plans.
- v. Include investment planning as part of disaster risk reduction strategies, and ensure their alignment with national development plans and investments.
- vi. Ensure that the development and revision of national and local disaster risk reduction strategies include provisions on displacement and human mobility.
- vii. Integrate locally-led and nationally-supported plans that include early warning, response coordination, evacuation plans and preparedness mechanisms to implement rescue and relief activities.
- viii. Include disaster risk reduction-related indicators in national development plans, in line with the Sustainable Development Goal-Sendai Framework indicators.
- ix. Link national strategies with the Sendai Framework Monitor, using customized national indicators to complement the global targets and indicators.
- x. Promote knowledge sharing and learning on the experiences of developing and implementing national and local strategies, through mechanisms like the Asian Ministerial Conferences, International Strategy for Disaster Reduction-Asia Partnership and peer learning.

(b) Ensure multi-stakeholder engagement in the development and revision of national and local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework and integrate disaster risk reduction into sectoral plans.

(c) Promote long-term disaster risk reduction plans and monitoring tools’ alignment with national development and climate change plans, in line with Paris Agreement, Sustainable Development Goals and New Urban Agenda to achieve risk-sensitive development.

(d) Strengthen risk-informed decision-making including through inter-sectoral and inter-ministerial coordination, in particular, between national

disaster risk management, development planning and sectoral ministries with clearly identified roles and responsibilities.

(e) Establish and strengthen inclusive multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral national and local platforms, with the participation of local community leaders and other stakeholders

(f) Empower local authorities and local communities including through resources, incentives, operational guidance and decision-making responsibilities, as appropriate, to support implementation of disaster risk reduction at the local level.

(g) Create an enabling environment through national legislation and policies to promote local leadership and engagement in disaster risk reduction planning and implementation, including through local authority associations at national, regional and global levels, and forums such as the Asian Local Leaders Forum for Disaster Resilience.

(h) Promote implementation of health aspects of the Sendai Framework, including through re-emphasising the Bangkok Principles, with a view to ensuring more systematic cooperation, coherence and integration between disaster and health risk management.

(i) Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in disaster risk reduction.

(j) Support systematic inclusion of engagement and partnership with children and youth, in all phases of disaster risk reduction through sharing of information and involvement in decision-making processes at all levels.

(k) Accelerate United Nations Country Teams' actions to implement the United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience in country-level operations and processes.

3.3 Priority 3: Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience

3.3.1 Regional Actions

(a) Establish and strengthen regional cooperation on disaster resilient infrastructure including through assessing risk, developing infrastructure standards and managing risks in key infrastructure sectors.

(b) Strengthen regional cooperation and facilitate exchange of leading practices and lessons learned with private sector organizations and chambers of commerce, especially on forming successful public-private partnerships for disaster risk reduction.

(c) Enhance the resilience of natural ecosystems, which function as natural buffers, through transboundary cooperation.

(d) Promote an integrated approach of blue, green and grey infrastructure for sustainable and resilient urban development and disaster control infrastructure.

(e) Encourage the provision of human, financial and technical resources by multilateral and bilateral donors to support actions to implement the Asia Regional Plan.

3.3.2 National and Local Actions

(a) Establish and strengthen regulatory frameworks to reinforce risk considerations in structural and non-structural investments, including forecast-based financing.

(b) Ensure that disaster risk reduction strategies, national development plans and climate change adaptation plans are fully aligned and backed by investment frameworks.

(c) Create an enabling environment, including through enacting appropriate legislative and regulatory action for enabling private sector investment in disaster risk reduction and resilience.

(d) Track public investments on disaster risk reduction to better understand disaster risk reduction investments and to mobilize resources, including through engaging with development funds, banks, private foundations and stakeholders.

(e) Create incentives for disaster risk reduction investments by public, private and development organizations, including through adding disaster risk reduction as a project approval marker.

(f) Pursue a balance in investments in non-structural disaster risk reduction measures (e.g. regulation, planning etc.) and structural measures (e.g. infrastructure development) and develop investment case models to demonstrate this balance.

(g) Increase investment in disaster-resilient diversified livelihoods, with particular focus on vulnerable groups, including smallholder farmers, and support to micro, small and medium enterprises.

(h) Promote national mechanisms, including resilience-oriented and shock-responsive social protection schemes, for disaster risk transfer and insurance as complementary measures to address residual risk.

(i) Develop and enforce regulations to ensure all new infrastructure is disaster risk-resilient.

(j) Strengthen partnership with the private sector, and train construction workers and masons in affordable techniques for constructing resilient infrastructure.

(k) Strengthen the policy environment and capacity for planning, developing and maintaining disaster-resilient infrastructure, including through capacitating local authorities to link resilient infrastructure and financing

(l) Protect or support the protection of historical and cultural heritage sites.

(m) Strengthen engagement with the private sector, including through national and local disaster risk reduction platforms, to enhance investment in disaster risk reduction and risk-informed investments in line with the Global Compact principles.

(n) Encourage business associations, chambers of commerce and the private sector to integrate disaster risk reduction into business models, corporate practices, and supply and value chains.

(o) Engage development funds, banks, private foundations and stakeholders to develop new, and strengthen existing, funding mechanisms for disaster risk reduction.

(p) Invest in the development of resilient health systems, and design and implement inclusive policies to ensure access to social safety nets and primary health care services, including maternal, new born and child health, and sexual and reproductive health.

3.4 Priority 4: Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to “build back better” in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction

3.4.1 Regional Actions

(a) Strengthen existing regional mechanisms to enhance multi-hazard early warning and preparedness for multiple and transboundary hazards, as well as pre- and post-disaster recovery frameworks.

(b) Strengthen regional cooperation on preparedness by sharing innovations, new technologies, data and good practices and conducting joint exercises, including through the leadership of regional organizations.

3.4.2 National and Local Actions

(a) Prepare and update multi-sectoral disaster preparedness and contingency plans, supported by simulation exercises and other measures to assess their validity and effectiveness at local, national and regional levels.

(b) Integrate disaster risk reduction into disaster preparedness planning, ensuring comprehensive and accessible service and referral mechanisms to promote the specific needs of women and girls, children and youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, displaced persons and other at-risk populations, including prevention of and response to gender-based violence.

(c) Strengthen the resilience of critical infrastructure and basic social services before, during and after disasters.

(d) Make comprehensive school and hospital safety a priority, and ensure all schools, hospitals, and educational and health institutions, develop school and hospital disaster management plans including continuity plans.

(e) Integrate disaster risk concerns and disaster risk management measures in post-disaster recovery and reconstruction planning and practice, including developing/revising building codes and standards in recovery and reconstruction practices at the national and local levels, including in temporary settlements for persons displaced by disasters.

(f) Encourage community-led approaches to be incorporated in recovery and reconstruction planning and efforts.

(g) Strengthen multi-hazard early warning systems to ensure last mile accessibility, including through enhanced quality of early warning that can be locally understood and actioned by relevant authorities and communities.

(h) Strengthen mechanisms for forecast-based early action and financing for preparedness and response.

(i) Build capacity of local authorities, private sector and communities to develop and implement local disaster management and recovery plans (including retrofitting, reconstruction, building code enforcement, post-trauma programmes, resilient livelihoods and shelter provision for displaced populations).

(j) Ensure that preparedness and contingency plans take into account the specific needs of displaced persons, refugees and migrants, and other at-risk populations.

(k) Systematically engage the private sector in the preparedness phase towards effective public-private cooperation in response, recovery, and to “Build Back Better”.

4. Implementation and Monitoring of the Asia Regional Plan

The Asia Regional Plan, and the constituent biennial Action Plan, is developed to guide the implementation of the Sendai Framework in the region. The overall roles and responsibilities of international, regional and sub-regional organizations and entities will be in line with the Sendai Framework, as outlined in the Asia Regional Plan (Section VI). The Action Plan will continue to be monitored through the Sendai Framework monitoring system, supplemented by other information sources.

4.1 Strengthening Sendai Framework Monitoring.

Monitoring of the Sendai Framework is critical for building a strong evidence base for assessing the wide range of interventions being implemented and planned to prevent and reduce disaster risk, as outlined in the previous sections. It is important to follow the standards for disaster-related data to allow for consistent measurement of progress towards achievement of the Sendai Framework and disaster-related Sustainable Development Goal targets. With this view, the following actions are recommended to strengthen and sustain the data ecosystem required for the Sendai Framework.

(a) Increase data collection and establish baselines at national and local levels to report on Sendai Framework and relevant Sustainable Development Goals indicators disaggregated, to the extent possible, by sex, age and disability.

(b) Explore and strengthen linkages between Sendai Framework monitoring, National Statistical Organizations, National Informatics Centres and available disaster loss databases.

(c) Include disaster risk reduction-related indicators in national development plans, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals-Sendai Framework indicators and link national disaster risk reduction strategies with the Sendai Framework Monitor, using customized national indicators to complement the global targets and indicators.

(d) Promote stronger institutional and stakeholder coordination and centralized national disaster data platforms as effective tools for collection and validation of data to enable Member States to report on the Sendai Framework Monitor.

(e) Enhance the capacity of countries to use the Sendai Framework Monitor in partnership with United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction.

(f) Intergovernmental and international organizations, and the stakeholder groups, support country reporting on the Sendai Framework through strengthening disaster loss database development and use of data in informing policies and programmes.

4.2 Role of International Strategy for Disaster Reduction-Asia Partnership

The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction-Asia Partnership Forum – under the stewardship of United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, with the engagement of governments (via Sendai Framework focal points), intergovernmental organizations, the United Nations, international organizations, civil society organizations and stakeholders – constitute a regional policy support mechanism. Key responsibilities of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction-Asia Partnership include:

- (a) Periodically assess progress in implementation of the Asia Regional Plan and the Sendai Framework.
- (b) Share lessons and identify key gaps in implementation of disaster risk reduction in the region.
- (c) Provide or mobilize technical expertise and guidance on disaster risk reduction at the regional-level.
- (d) Advocate for accelerated implementation of the Sendai Framework.

4.3 Role of Intergovernmental Organizations

Link the implementation and monitoring of the Asia Regional Plan with sub-regional plans and programmes, for example, the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response Work Programme 2016-2020, the Economic Cooperation Organization Regional Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific, and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation Comprehensive Framework on Disaster Management.

4.4 Role of Stakeholders

- (a) Enhance the role of established stakeholder coordination mechanisms to support implementation of the Sendai Framework and the Asia Regional Plan, including through leveraging existing and mobilising new members.
- (b) Strengthen and concretise efforts to achieve the voluntary commitments and stakeholder statements of action.
- (c) Support national governments in the collection of data, in particular disaggregated at the local-level, to report on progress of the Sendai Framework and Sustainable Development Goals.

4.5 Role of United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction is mandated to facilitate implementation, follow-up and monitoring of the Sendai Framework. Key responsibilities include:

- (a) Facilitate the convening of the Asian Ministerial Conferences, International Strategy for Disaster Reduction-Asia Partnership Forums and associated coordination mechanisms in support of the implementation of the Asia Regional Plan.
- (b) Develop national and local capacity in partnership with relevant organizations to develop and implement national and local strategies, report progress on Sendai Framework, Sustainable Development Goals and national disaster risk reduction progress, and scale up disaster risk reduction advocacy.
- (c) Strengthen utilization of the Sendai Framework Monitor's data and analytics to inform disaster risk reduction policies and programmes.
- (d) Strengthen national disaster loss databases in the region, and provide technical support to countries to ensure collection of required data to report on the Sendai Framework, particularly disaggregated data by sex, age and disability.
- (e) Facilitate engagement of stakeholder groups in the implementation of the Asia Regional Plan and enhance disaster risk reduction advocacy and capacity building.

Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

Preventing Disaster Risk: Protecting Sustainable Development

Ulaanbaatar Declaration

We, the Ministers and Heads of Delegations responsible for Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia and the Pacific having met in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia from 3 to 6 July 2018 on the occasion of the 2018 Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction:

1. *Express deep concern* at the continuing impact of disasters in the region, resulting in recurrent loss of human lives and livelihoods, displacement of people, and environmental, economic, social and material damages.
2. *Realize* the need to focus on underlying, interconnected and evolving disaster risk factors such as unplanned and rapid urbanization, development, migration, population growth, and climate change and poverty.
3. *Recognize* the importance of ensuring coherence among the global frameworks such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development, the Agenda for Humanity, the New Urban Agenda, the Small Island Developing States Modalities of Action Pathway, and regional inter-governmental processes including the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, and the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific.
4. *Recognize* that science and technology research and its application, including in space and spatial, and information and communication technology, have and will continue to have a significant role in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
5. *Affirm* that the need to continue to build and strengthen resilience of persons, communities and countries and the environment is at the core of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and the Asia Regional Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework.
6. *Recall* the Cancun High-Level Communiqué: Ensuring the resilience of infrastructure and housing and other outcomes of the 2017 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.
7. *Renew* the commitment to ensure continuity of our work, building on the outcomes of the 2016 Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in India, and to continue the progress made by governments to implement, and partner and support organizations and other stakeholders, to implement the Asia Regional Plan.
8. *Appreciate* the vital role played by stakeholder groups as enablers, partnering with governments and communities, in the implementation of the Asia Regional Plan at local, national and regional levels, including through fulfilment of their voluntary commitments.

Hereby, call on all governments and stakeholders to:

9. *Commit* to translating coherence of global frameworks into policy and practice to achieve resilience at national and local levels across all sectors

including by strengthening governance arrangements and by providing practical guidance to ensure effective and efficient management of disaster risk.

10. *Urgently accelerate* actions to develop and implement national and local strategies on disaster risk reduction, thereby achieving target (e) of the Sendai Framework by 2020.

11. *Ensure* a human rights-based, people-centred and whole-of-society approach in development, implementation and monitoring of national and local disaster risk reduction strategies inclusive of women and girls, children and youth, persons with disabilities, older persons, displaced and migrant populations, and those in vulnerable situations such as the poor and marginalized.

12. *Promote* full and equal participation of women in leading, designing, and implementing gender-sensitive disaster risk reduction policies, plans and programmes, through joint efforts by public and private sector, supported by appropriate legal frameworks and allocation of necessary resources.

13. *Support* systematic inclusion of engagement and partnership with children and youth, in all phases of disaster risk reduction through sharing of information and involvement in decision-making processes at all levels.

14. *Promote and scale-up* community-level actions that strengthen local capacities and foster local leadership to reduce disaster risk and enhance resilience.

15. *Establish* new and strengthen existing regional, sub-regional, national, sub-national and local platforms on disaster risk reduction, with the active engagement of local and national stakeholders, in coordination with regional and international partners and cooperation mechanisms.

16. *Commit* to mobilizing the necessary resources, especially finances, to implement national, sub-national and local strategies and promote greater investment and financing for disaster risk reduction at the local level.

17. *Promote* risk-sensitive public and private investments for building disaster resilience, in particular, to make new infrastructure resilient and accessible and design innovative solutions for affordable retrofitting of existing infrastructure.

18. *Reinforce* public-private partnerships in disaster risk reduction including the use of different disaster risk transfer and financing instruments such as insurance, forecast-based financing and social protection schemes.

19. *Commit* to integration of climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction, including furthering the resilience of natural ecosystems.

20. *Promote* dialogue and knowledge-sharing among a broad range of national and local stakeholders, including universities, the private sector, and science and technology communities to enhance the availability of innovative technology and research, facilitate capacity development, and contribute to decision-making for addressing local risks and the needs of the most vulnerable.

21. *Scale up* effective early warning systems and their translation into early action including for hard-to-reach and remote populations.

22. *Integrate* disaster risk reduction into preparedness, response, post-disaster recovery and “Build Back Better” by improving coordination, ensuring continuity of critical infrastructure and services, and facilitating effective linkages between relief, rehabilitation and development.

23. *Commit* to greater accountability for disaster risk reduction, including through systematically collecting and recording disaster damage and losses, conducting and sharing risk assessments and analysis to inform national and local strategies, establishing monitoring baselines, and using the Sendai Framework Monitor to assess progress in achievement of global and national targets and indicators, using sex, age and disability disaggregated data and local inputs.

24. *Pledge* to increase North-South cooperation, complemented by South-South and triangular cooperation, to reinforce the financial and technical capacity of developing and least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.

25. *Promote* International Day for Disaster Reduction, World Tsunami Awareness Day, and regional and national disaster risk reduction days, to raise awareness of disaster risk reduction and to encourage global actions for behavioural change.

Resolve to:

26. *Implement* the actions recommended in this Ulaanbaatar Declaration, deliver on our commitments and share the progress at the next Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2020.

27. *Work* with partner organizations and stakeholders to implement the Action Plan 2018-2020 of the Asia Regional Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework, and update on the progress through the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction-Asia Partnership Forum.

28. *Call* on the stakeholder groups to deliver on their voluntary commitments and periodically report on progress.

Recognize the role of United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction in coordinating global and regional efforts to support implementation and monitoring of the Sendai Framework, including through its partnership with regional agencies, international organizations, civil society and the private sector.

Acknowledge global and regional meetings and initiatives hosted by governments and recognize their outcomes; including Bangladesh (Second International Conference on Disability and Disaster Risk Management 2018), China (Second Asian Science and Technology Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction 2018), Fiji (Joint Pacific Platform for Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Roundtable 2017), India (International Workshop on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure 2018), and Viet Nam (Regional Conference on Strengthening Resilient Food and Agriculture Systems 2018).

Appreciate the leadership of the governments of the People’s Republic of China, the Republic of India, the Federation of Malaysia, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Indonesia and the Royal Thai Government in hosting previous Asian Ministerial Conferences on Disaster Risk Reduction and for making progress in implementing the Declarations of these Conferences.

Express our gratitude and appreciation to the Government and people of Mongolia for their hospitality in organizing the 2018 Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, the first-ever in a landlocked developing country, in partnership with United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and look forward to the next Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction 2020 to be hosted by the Government of Australia.

Adopted on 6 July 2018, in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.
