

Bangladesh Statement on

Agenda Item 3 (f): Disaster Risk Reduction Programme, 69th Session

Honble Chair, let me take this opportunity of congratulating you on your ^{assumption} ~~station~~ of the Chair of the Committee of the Whole.

Bangladesh has a long history of natural disaster. The Global Assessment Report of 2011 puts Bangladesh as the country most vulnerable ^{to} floods, with around 12 per cent of the country's population living under constant flood risk. Again, cyclone is the second highest possible natural disaster in Bangladesh and the population under the threat of facing cyclonic hazard is around 4.0 per cent ^{of} 150 million population of the country. The impact of these natural hazards on the people and economy has been enormous. According to one study, major floods and cyclone alone have caused an average of 3.5 per cent negative influence on national GDP.

Bangladesh also has a long history of coping with major ^{natural} disasters. The government and people have a wealth of experience in preparing for, and responding to, disaster events. "Building Resilience to Natural Disaster" is a priority area in Bangladesh. It ^{is} a priority area under Bangladesh's Perspective-Plan, Sixth Five Year Plan, National Sustainable Development Strategy and Country Investment Plan for Food Security. The Standing Orders of Disaster (1997) has been updated in 2010 incorporating all risks and its linkages with disasters and development.

^{Bangladesh has} We have adopted a more holistic approach to reducing risks and vulnerabilities. In line with the strategic priorities of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), the stated vision of the GoB is to "reduce the risk of people, especially the poor and the disadvantaged, from the effects of natural, environmental and human induced hazards, to a manageable and acceptable humanitarian level and to have in place an efficient emergency response management system".

While The Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief is overall responsible for coordinating national disaster management efforts across all agencies, Under Standing Orders of Disaster, a series of inter-related committees, at both national and sub-national levels have been created to ensure effective planning and coordination of disaster risk reduction and emergency response management at all levels. The National Disaster Management Council (NDMC) is the highest body chaired by the Prime Minister. [Bangladesh Climate Change

Disaster Management Act, 2012 and
Strategy and Action Plan (2009), the guidelines for climate risk resilient fund *change*
has been prepared. *adopted* A National Plan for Disaster Management (2010-2015) has *also*
been prepared and published. Bangladesh *also* has been a part for developing
SAARC disaster management framework.

GoB has developed state-of-the-art warning systems for floods, cyclones and storm surges, and is expanding community-based disaster preparedness. Almost 50,000 community volunteers are involved in Cyclone Preparedness program. Climate resilient varieties of rice and other crops have also been developed. From the conventional response and relief oriented approach, Bangladesh has moved to a comprehensive disaster management framework. Parallel with structural interventions such as constructing embankments and cyclone shelters, there have also been non-structural investments such as the establishment of Disaster Management Committees at all levels, government policies and programmes, as well as notably the community-based cyclone early warning system and response mechanisms.

The present government is committed to reduce ~~of~~ human, economic and environmental costs of disasters. With a view to enhancing overall disaster management capacity, we have set up the Flood Forecasting Warning Centre (FFWC) *through* Data management and Interactive Web Site, Institutes of Water and Flood Management (IWFM), Japan International Center for Disaster and Urban Safety (JIDPUS) at Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, *and enhancing capacity of* Cyclone Preparedness Programme (CPP), Geological Survey of Bangladesh (GSB), Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD), *and creating National Disaster Volunteer*. The early warning information generation and dissemination *mechanism* has been improved. *also*

Tens of thousands of mobile users in Bangladesh's flood and cyclone-prone areas now receive advance warning of an impending natural disaster through an alert *on* their cell phones. The country has an effective early *cyclone* warning system operated by the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society through its *mentioned earlier* 50,000 volunteers *who move around with bicycles and megaphones informing people of the impending danger and advising them to evacuate their homes*.

Building the resilience to disasters can have multiplier effects and accelerate achievement of the MDG. In view of that, Government of Bangladesh has ~~been~~ planned to work with 12 major ministries to develop

technologies for reducing vulnerabilities and identify disaster proofing technologies in respective sectors. [USD 12 million has been earmarked for 2010-2014 to identify and pilot test the technologies under Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme (Phase II).]

Disaster information and data ~~baseline~~ (to estimate initial impact, access disaster areas) and estimation of economic and environmental damage is always difficult as several methodologies are being used. ^{Dept. of} Disaster Management Bureau (DMB) is in process of establishing Damage Loss and Need Assessment Cell (DLNA) ~~cell~~ and Multi-Hazards Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (MRVA) cell, which needs technical support to ensure that Bangladesh can produce inter-exchangeable disaster data and information on the disaster impacts, total losses in terms of GDP and the need for reinvestment for recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

Bangladesh strongly advocates for promoting the regional cooperative mechanisms and resource-sharing arrangements for disaster and climate change risk reduction in the region, including on information, communications and space technologies, to improve different hazard identification and preparedness planning, partnerships and collaboration with regional and sub-regional organizations. Strengthening regional network to have real-time reliable data would be most useful in building effective safeguard against disaster. An integrated disaster information system is a pre-requisite for an effective disaster management decision support system in Bangladesh.

The trans-boundary hazards and disasters require need regional cooperation as well as through bi-lateral or multilaterals programmes. These need to be strengthened. We are of the view that Regional Disaster Emergency Response Team (DERT) formation and with regional storage facilities (Relief-Items Bank) for emergency grant aid and relief supply goods and services would be very useful in effectively addressing disaster and post-disaster calamities. For better prevention and preparedness, integrated river basin management, including water-related disasters issues need to be brought under regional cooperation for disaster management.

Thank you ^{Madam} ~~Mr.~~ Chairperson.