

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It is my pleasure to present to you the report of the 3rd Meeting of the ADPC Regional Consultative Committee on Disaster Management (RCC3) held in New Delhi, India, October 29-31 2002.

The third RCC meeting was a milestone event. It was the first time that the meeting was organized outside ADPC and hosted by the Government of India. Moreover, the first day of the meeting being held concurrently with the National Seminar marking the Indian National Day for Disaster Reduction provided the international participants with the opportunity to learn about the efforts the Indian Government has made to reduce disaster risks of the vulnerable communities in the country.

The inspiring addresses from H.E. Mr. L.K. Advani, Deputy Prime Minister of India and from Prof. Krasae Chanawongse, ADPC's Chairman of the Board of Trustees, as well as the active participation of Honorable Minister Samaraweera of Sri Lanka, Ambassadors and senior officials from several countries demonstrates the growing interest in and political support for disaster reduction.

Building on earlier meetings, RCC3 constitutes a significant institutionalization of the RCC mechanism. We, at ADPC, accept the challenge of the ambitious programs recommended and the responsibility to work with member countries to mobilize support and resources.

Based on the discussions and recommendations that emerged from the meeting, we have continued working with our partners in undertaking various programs. Of particular significance are:

- The organizing of a meeting of provincial officials of Cambodia and Vietnam in the areas of flood management and mitigation during 2003.
- Partnering with MRC in the implementation of their Flood Management and Mitigation Program (FMM), where ADPC will be associated in capacity building activities.
- Phase II of Partnership for Disaster Reduction-South East Asia (PDR-SEA) project in collaboration with ESCAP, with financial support from DIPECHO.
- Initiating a dialogue with donor organizations for developing implementation of Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management Approach.

Following the precedence set at RCC3, I am pleased to inform you that the Government of Bangladesh has put forward its invitation to host the next RCC meeting in Dhaka. As recommended by the member countries, the theme of the meeting will be "Urban Disaster Mitigation and Sustainable Development".

I am confident that RCC will continue to serve as a forum to share and exchange ideas and experience as well as a platform to advance disaster management networking and capacity building of the countries in the region in the years to come.

I look forward to collaborating with you in working towards that vision, and to meeting you again at the RCC4 later this year.

Sincerely

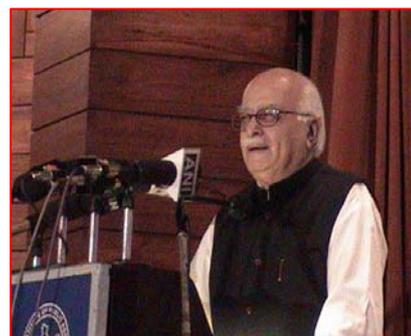
Dr. Suvit Yodmani
Executive Director, Asian Disaster Preparedness Center

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The third Meeting of the ADPC Regional Consultative Committee on Disaster Management (RCC3) was held in New Delhi, India from 29-31 October 2002, in collaboration with the Government of India. Altogether 20 delegates from 14 RCC member countries comprising heads of NDMOs from Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam, and Ambassadors and senior officials from Embassies of Bhutan, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Thailand and Sri Lanka together with 25 observers consisting of ADPC partners and representatives from regional organizations, UN Agencies, and bilateral and multilateral funding agencies such as: ADB, ADRC, ARC, AusAID, DFID, ECHO, EWC, MFESB, USAID/OFDA, UNDP, WHO, and senior officials from the Government of India attended the meeting.



The opening day of the RCC3 was held concurrently with a National Seminar on the Indian National Day for Disaster Reduction. The joint opening ceremony was held at 10:00 am on Tuesday, 29 October 2002 at the Nehru Memorial Library, Teen Murti House.

The Indian Ministry of Home Affairs and Deputy Prime Minister, H.E. L.K. Advani inaugurated the meeting and in his address exhorted organizations and countries to be proactive and synergetic. Professor Krasae Chanawongse, Chairman of ADPC Board of Trustees delivered the keynote address. The ceremony was attended by Ambassadors and counsellors from embassies in New Delhi, senior officials from UN agencies, representatives of other international organizations and agencies, NGOs, delegates from RCC member countries, senior officials from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India and the media.

The second and third days of the meeting were held at the Crowne Plaza Surya Hotel in New Delhi.

The meeting consisted of nine substantive sessions. The first three sessions on the first day comprised mainly of presentations from the host country India, RCC member countries and international organizations and NGOs operating in the region. The presentations covered a wide range of areas from lesson learned from recent disasters and programs to existing regional cooperation and initiatives taken to strengthen them. The second day of the meeting introduced to the participants the work of ADPC and its follow up actions since last RCC meeting, followed by a session on prioritizing capacity building needs in RCC member countries. The third day saw a special session on Drought Management where RCC member countries shared their experiences and eminent speakers from renowned organizations presented the recent trends and advances in the field. The last session of the meeting decided on the future directions of the RCC meetings as follows:

- The RCC member countries agreed to make a collective request to AusAID and other donor organizations for funding support to further develop the RCC mechanism and implement priority action programs in the areas of disaster risk management and capacity building of natural disaster management systems. ADPC was requested to develop a proposal and member countries were encouraged to give inputs.
- Bangladesh offered to host the next meeting after clearances from concerned authorities and the members welcomed Bangladesh's offer.
- Considering the growing urban population in many Asian cities and increasing severity of hazards in the urban areas, it was agreed that "Urban Risk Reduction and Sustainable Development" would be the theme for the next meeting, RCC4.

RECOMMENDATIONS

i. COMPREHENSIVE DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT APPROACH AND PROGRAMS

The 3rd meeting reiterated the recommendations of the 2nd RCC meeting, that all members adopt a comprehensive multi-hazard approach covering all phases of disaster risk management and reduction. It endorsed the need for the RCC and its member countries to undertake a program to promote this approach and noted work done in Bangladesh, China, India and the Philippines.

ii. CAPACITY BUILDING OF NATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Based on a pre-meeting questionnaire and deliberations at the meeting, the RCC prioritized **key target groups** for capacity building as government officials from all departments at different levels; local government officials and local disaster management committees; specialised assessment and response teams and NGOs and media. Priority **themes** for training were basic disaster management orientation for all stakeholders, disaster management planning, specialised skills training in emergency response and coordination, damage assessment and needs analysis and public awareness.

The **South East Asian** delegates identified country priorities: for Cambodia and Vietnam: training for community leaders; Thailand: training for officers at national and provincial levels on disaster management fundamentals; and Philippines: enhanced skill training for search and rescue workers.

Delegates from **South Asia** prioritized national level training curriculum development; training of trainers at national, district and community levels and training for communities on response with key target groups as school children, health professionals, engineers, architects, NGO and government officers, search and rescue workers and media. The group also identified the pre-requisites for the successful delivery of training as the skills and knowledge for vulnerability and impact analysis; existence of early warning systems; database of available resources; local contingency and response plans and the need for legislative backup.

The **Central Asia** group identified priorities for the primer and training, as emergency response; public awareness especially educating school children and training of media personnel; gender sensitivity and post disaster reconstruction and rehabilitation.

The meeting emphasized the importance of building capacities of training institutions at sub-national level in countries of the region and the need for a regional level effort to build their capacities. It encouraged ADPC to develop a program in this regard.

iii. REGIONAL COOPERATION IN DROUGHT MANAGEMENT

The meeting discussed the potential areas of cooperation between RCC member countries and the NGOs and international organizations in the region in the area of drought management and listed ways and means of strengthening the drought early warning system through regional cooperation. The meeting noted with interest the initiatives by UNDP, ICRISAT, IUCN, ISDR, ADPC and encouraged ADPC to initiate partnership with these programs. The RCC also endorsed the need for cooperation and dialogue between the climate related and disaster risk management communities.

The activities for improvement of drought early warning system were identified as:

- Sharing of information, experiences and facilities (such as remote sensing data, equipment, and technical expertise) between neighboring countries.
- Facilitating regional linkages and networking of institutions, in the areas of forecasting and early warning system, and to promote more research programs.
- Designing and implementing pilot projects at community level for dissemination of early warning and mitigating drought impacts.

Starting points for strengthening regional cooperation were identified as:

- Designing a common strategy and program for managing land and water resources in the region;
- Developing of regional database of hazards, vulnerable areas and drought management practices;
- Recognizing river basins as geographical unit for starting cooperation and building on existing cooperative programs of various regional agencies.

iv. COOPERATION WITH/ AMONG MEMBER COUNTRIES

Capacity Building in Wildfire Management

To counter the devastating impacts of wildfire in Mongolia, ADPC offered to facilitate, in association with Australian Fire Services, assistance to the Government of Mongolia in enhancing the capacity of wildfire management in the country.

Mekong Delta Cooperation in Flood Management

ADPC was requested to play the role of convener and organize a meeting for two neighboring countries in the Mekong Region: Cambodia and Vietnam. The meeting will be at the provincial level and representatives from the flood-prone border provinces from the two countries will be invited along with officers from the NDMOs of Cambodia and Vietnam.

ASEAN Cooperation in Disaster Management

The meeting appreciated the development of the ASEAN Regional Program on Disaster Management and ADPC's role in the program. The members encouraged international organizations and donor countries to support its implementation.

South Asian Cooperation

Recalling the discussions at earlier RCC meetings and the exhortation of the Indian Deputy Prime Minister, the RCC called on the South Asian countries to develop a South Asian action program on disaster management and for ADPC to continue dialogue with SAARC in this regard.

v. LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS IN RCC MEMBER COUNTRIES

The meeting reiterated that the legal and institutional arrangements of some of the RCC member countries were undergoing innovations. The publication ADPC was currently working on, sharing experiences on legal and institutional arrangements, was welcomed.

vi. PRIMER ON URBAN DISASTER MITIGATION

The meeting supported the plan to provide a primer drawing on recent experiences, good practices, lessons learned in Urban Disaster Mitigation initiatives of AUDMP, other programs of ADPC and from individuals and institutions dealing with aspects of UDM within and outside Asia. There were altogether 17 potential themes identified for the framework of the Primer, and members also made certain specific suggestions for inclusion.

ACRONYMS

| | |
|-----------|--|
| AC | ADPC Advisory Council |
| ADB | Asian Development Bank |
| ADMIT | Asian Disaster Mitigation Training Network |
| ADPC | Asian Disaster Preparedness Center |
| ADRC | Asian Disaster Reduction Center, Kobe, Japan |
| AEGDM | ASEAN Experts Group on Disaster Management |
| APELL | Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies at the Local Level |
| ARC | American Red Cross |
| ARF | ASEAN Regional Forum |
| ARPDM | ASEAN Regional Program on Disaster Management |
| ARRDR | Asian Regional Report on Disaster Reduction |
| ASEAN | Association of South East Asian Nations |
| AUDMP | Asian Urban Disaster Mitigation Program of ADPC |
| AusAID | Australian Agency for International Development |
| BoT | Board of Trustees of ADPC |
| CBDM | Community Based Disaster Management |
| CDMP | Comprehensive Disaster Management Program of Bangladesh |
| CSSR | Collapsed Structure Search and Rescue Course of ADPC |
| DANA | Damage Assessment and Needs Analysis Program of ADPC |
| DDMC | District Disaster Management Committee, Bangladesh |
| DEWS | Drought Early Warning System |
| DFID | Department for International Development, United Kingdom |
| DM | Disaster Management |
| DMCN | Drought Monitoring Center - Nairobi |
| ECE | Extreme Climatic Events Program of ADPC |
| ECHO | European Community Humanitarian Office |
| ENSO | El Nino and Southern Oscillation |
| EVRC | Earthquake Vulnerability Reduction for Cities |
| EWC | East West Center |
| FEMA | Federal Emergency Management Agency |
| FMMSIP | Flood Management and Mitigation Strategy Implementation Program of MRC |
| FRM | Flood Risk Management |
| GIS | Geographic Information System |
| GOI | Government of India |
| GSDMA | Gujarat State Disaster Management Authority, India |
| HKH | Hindu Kush Himalayas |
| HKH-HYCOS | Hydrological Cycle Observing System for the HKH region |
| IAS | Indian Administrative Service |
| ICIMOD | International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, Kathmandu |
| ICRISAT | International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid tropics |
| IDNDR | International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction |
| IFRC | International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies |
| IGAD | Intergovernmental Authority on Development |
| IIPA | Indian Institute of Public Administration |
| IMD | India Meteorological Department |
| ISDR | International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (also UN-ISDR) |
| IUCN | International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources |
| JICA | Japan International Cooperation Agency |
| MDMR | Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, Bangladesh |
| MFESB | Melbourne Fire and Emergency Services Board, Melbourne, Australia |
| MOU | Memorandum of Understanding |

| | |
|------------|---|
| MRC | Mekong River Commission |
| NCDM | National Committee for Disaster Management, Cambodia |
| NDCC | National Disaster Coordinating Council, the Philippines |
| NDMC | National Disaster Management Center |
| NDMIS | National Disaster Management Information System |
| NDMO | National Disaster Management Office |
| NDMP | National Disaster Management Plan |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| OAS | Organization of American States |
| OCD | Office of Civil Defence, the Philippines |
| OCHA | Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the UN |
| OFDA | Office of the US Foreign Disaster Assistance of USAID |
| OSDMA | Orissa State Disaster Management Authority, India |
| PDIR | Partnerships, Development, Information and Research Division of ADPC |
| PDR-SEA II | Partnership in Disaster Reduction-South East Asia Program - Phase II of ADPC |
| PEER | ADPC Program for Enhancement of Emergency Response |
| PDS | Public Distribution System |
| PRI | Panchayti Raj Institution of India |
| RCC1 | First Meeting of the ADPC Regional Consultative Committee on Disaster Management (November 20 - 22, 2000) |
| RCC2 | Second Meeting of the ADPC Regional Consultative Committee on Disaster Management (October 31 - November 2, 2001) |
| RCC3 | Third Meeting of the ADPC Regional Consultative Committee on Disaster Management (October 29-31, 2001) |
| RMTC | Regional Meteorological Training Center of IMD, India |
| ROAP | Regional Office for the Asia and the Pacific of UNEP |
| RTG | Royal Thai Government |
| SAARC | South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Secretariat at Kathmandu) |
| SOPAC | South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (Secretariat at Suva, Fiji) |
| TDRM | Total Disaster Risk Management |
| ToT | Training of Trainers |
| UDM | Urban Disaster Mitigation |
| UNDMT | United Nations Disaster Management Team |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Program |
| UNEP | United Nations Environment Program |
| UNEP-DTIE | UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics |
| UN-ESCAP | United Nations Economic and Social Commission for the Asia-Pacific |
| UN-FAO | United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization |
| UN-FCCC | United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change |
| UN-ISDR | United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction |
| UNTAET | United Nations Transitional Administration of East Timor |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |
| WB | World Bank |
| WCU | The World Conservation Union |
| WFP | World Food Program |
| WHO | World Health Organization |
| WHYCOS | World Hydrological Cycle Observing System of WMO |
| WMO | World Meteorological Organization |
| WNI | Water and Nature Initiatives Program of IUCN |

I. INTRODUCTION

Context

The third Meeting of the ADPC Regional Consultative Committee on Disaster Management (RCC3) was held in New Delhi, India from 29-31 October 2002, in collaboration with the Government of India. Altogether 20 delegates from 14 RCC member countries comprising heads of NDMOs from Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam, and Ambassadors and senior officials from Embassies of Bhutan, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Thailand and Sri Lanka together with 25 observers consisting of ADPC partners and representatives from regional organizations, UN Agencies, and bilateral and multilateral funding agencies such as: ADB, ADRC, ARC, AusAID, DFID, ECHO, EWC, MFESB, USAID/OFDA, UNDP, WHO, and senior officials from the Government of India attended the meeting (ANNEX I).



The RCC

ADPC is an independent, non-profit regional foundation, promoting risk reduction and capacity building in disaster management. The ADPC Board of Trustees (BoT), the international Advisory Council (AC) and the RCC are the three-tiered governance structure of the foundation.

The RCC was established in March 2000 and comprises BoT and AC members working in key government positions in national disaster management systems of countries throughout the Asia-Pacific region. Membership is by invitation of the Chairman of the BoT, with the 26 present members representing 23 countries and territories (ANNEX II).

The role of the RCC is to provide a consultative mechanism for

- Development of action strategies for disaster reduction in the region
- Promotion of cooperative programs on a regional and sub-regional basis
- Guidance to the work of ADPC and its future directions.

Objectives of the Meeting

The main objectives of RCC3 were:

- To identify disaster related needs and priorities of member countries;
- To promote regional and sub-regional cooperation and to enhance the effectiveness of the existing mechanisms;
- To enhance regional and sub-regional cooperation in drought management;
- To establish priority action areas in capacity building of national disaster management systems;
- To share experiences and lessons learned from recent disasters and programs;
- To develop proposals for consolidation of the RCC mechanism.

The agenda of the meeting is given at ANNEX III of this report.

II. THE OPENING CEREMONY

The opening day of the RCC3 was held concurrently with the National Seminar, organized by the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, on the Indian National Day for Disaster Reduction. This day is observed on the anniversary of the Orissa super cyclone in 1999. The joint opening

ceremony was held at 10:00 am on Tuesday, 29 October 2002 at the Nehru Memorial Library, Teen Murti House. The ceremony was attended by Ambassadors and counselors from embassies in New Delhi, senior officials from UN agencies, representatives of international organizations and agencies, NGOs, delegates from RCC member countries, senior officials from the Ministries of Home Affairs, Agriculture, Health, Urban Development of the Government of India and other specialist disaster management organizations, representatives of state governments and the media. The chief guest was His Excellency Mr. Lal Krishna Advani, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Home Affairs, Government of India.

The welcome address was given by Mr. R.C.A Jain IAS, Special Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India. Mr. Jain recalled the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR) declared by United Nations and its influence in ushering a paradigm shift from reactive response to proactive prevention and mitigation. The Government of India had sought to keep that spirit alive by observing the anniversary of the Orissa super cyclone as the National Day for Disaster Reduction with nation-wide activities to generate public awareness. In the context of risk management, the Ministry of Urban Development, Government of India had brought out a Vulnerability Atlas of India, which identified the hazard prone areas and vulnerable housing and related infrastructure where initiatives were needed for disaster prevention and mitigation. Regional cooperation should not remain in the realm of scientific and technological innovations and collaborations, but should also extend to capacity building of the community and strengthening the traditional coping mechanisms. The deliberations of the ADPC Regional Consultative Committee would be able to help develop a comprehensive course of action and response plan.

In his address, Dr. Suvit Yodmani, Executive Director of Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), expressed his appreciation to the Government of India for taking the initiative to host the meeting. RCC was set up three years ago with the main objective of enhancing regional cooperation in the vital areas of disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness. The first and the second meetings had endorsed the benefits and usefulness of RCC mechanism. ADPC had been working closely with regional organizations such as ASEAN, MRC and SAARC in pursuance of the key recommendations of the RCC meetings. The Center also worked closely with its RCC member countries, India in particular, collaborating with various institutions in the countries.

Mr. N. Gopalaswami IAS, Home Secretary, Government of India, in his address recalled that the Indian National Day for Disaster Reduction was not only a grim reminder of the massive loss of life and property caused by Orissa super cyclone but it was also an indication of the firm commitment of the Indian Government towards disaster preparedness, mitigation, response and relief. The Government of India had taken steps to counter the adverse affects of disasters through integration of disaster mitigation into development planning, conducting special training for the disaster management personnel, creating public awareness and preparation of a National Disaster Management Framework, covering all aspects of disaster preparedness and mitigation. It was heartening that the countries in Asia had decided to pool in their resources with firm determination to mitigate the hardship caused due to disasters and this RCC meeting would be able to further strengthen the coordination and cooperation among the Asian countries. In conclusion, the Home Secretary thanked ADPC for holding the third RCC meeting in India.



The Deputy Prime Minister released four posters brought out by the National Center for Disaster Management (NCDM) on the occasion of National Day for Disaster Reduction with three themes:

1. Prepare to ensure safety
2. Ensure safe development of buildings and infrastructure and
3. VASUDEVA (Voluntary Agencies for Sustainable Universal Development and Emergency Voluntary Action).

The Deputy Prime Minister also released six posters on Flood Preparedness produced by the Government of Uttar Pradesh, ADPC and Poorvanchal Gramin Vikas Sansthan, an NGO, under an ADB funded Technical Assistance program.

The RCC and National Seminar were jointly inaugurated by the Deputy Prime Minister. In his inaugural address, the Deputy Prime Minister said that living in one of the most disaster prone regions of the world, it was crucial for countries in Asia to identify and determine the initiatives needed for comprehensive disaster mitigation. India was committed to join efforts and had taken initiatives to strengthen bilateral and multilateral cooperation measures in the fields relating to science and technology and early warning systems, particularly for cyclone and flood management. Programs were also underway to develop a multi-disciplinary approach towards a comprehensive disaster management mechanism. He complimented ADPC for its initiatives and support to capacity building in Asian countries and regional cooperation and urged countries to learn from and contribute to these efforts. In the South Asian region, he recalled the 1994 SAARC Conference hosted by India and reiterated the need for SAARC to serve as an effective mechanism and platform for cooperation among South Asian countries in disaster reduction. He highlighted the threat of man-made disasters: both due to chemical accidents and from terrorist attacks; as well as threats from weapons of mass destruction. Speaking from his personal experience of managing disasters in the country, he urged participants to convert disaster into an opportunity to rebuild better quality systems and infrastructure. He urged all countries and organizations to be effective by being proactive and synergistic when dealing with disaster threats and working towards risk reduction.

The keynote address was presented by Professor Dr. Krasae Chanawongse, Chairman of ADPC Board of Trustees. Dr. Krasae emphasized the necessity of increased partnerships at the regional, national and community level, encouraged all the participants to have free and frank discussions and build on the success of earlier meetings.

Mr. Anil Sinha, Head, National Center for Disaster Management (NCDM), Indian Institute of Public Administration, proposed a vote of thanks.

A copy of all speeches at the opening ceremony is given at **ANNEX IV** of this report.

III. SESSION I: LESSONS LEARNED FROM PAST DISASTERS – INDIAN EXPERIENCE IN DISASTER MANAGEMENT

The first session of the GOI-ADPC Seminar was co-chaired by Mr. R.C.A Jain and Mr. Dennis Lazarus, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP India.

GSDMA INITIATIVES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Dr. P.K. Mishra IAS, Chief Executive Officer, Gujarat State Disaster Management Authority (GSDMA), gave a detailed presentation on GSDMA and its model of disaster management work in an Indian state.

The January 2001 Gujarat earthquake was the worst earthquake in the region in the last 180 years, with widespread impact affecting over 30% of population in the state. The needs arising from the tragedy led to the formation of Gujarat State Disaster Management Authority (GSDMA) on 8 February 2001. The major activities of GSDMA range from mitigation to emergency response to reconstruction. The GSDMA is a trust with a Governing Body headed by the Chief Minister of the state. Directly working under the Governing Body, a state level Advisory Committee, Central Implementation Review Group and CEO oversee the daily operations of GSDMA. The Government of Gujarat has also set up a task force for long-term disaster management actions, including effective preparedness and preparation of disaster management plans at various levels.

GSDMA is a lean and efficient structure, functioning with the flexible and task oriented approach. Over the past one and a half years, committed personnel of GSDMA have worked relentlessly in the reconstruction of infrastructure: roads, buildings, dams, power plant, water and power supply distribution networks, in the state of Gujarat. Workshops and trainings have been conducted for engineers, architects, personnel from fire services, medicine and police in diverse areas of earthquake resistance design and retrofitting of houses, hospital preparedness, search and rescue as well as general disaster management programs for government staff. Public awareness materials are developed and distributed to the people in the form of booklets and advertisements, providing information on preparedness of different type of disasters. GSDMA has envisaged establishing a seismological research institute, and a Gujarat Institute of Disaster Management.



Dr. Mishra highlighted lessons learned from the work of GSDMA. One of the areas is participatory involvement of community in reconstruction and rehabilitation process. Empowerment of women to enhance gender equity: joint ownership of houses to empower women, community based disaster management for sustainability and capacity building of local first responders are some of the priority areas that need special attention. Training of masons and engineers in multi-hazard construction and evolving appropriate construction technology is important.

Dr. Mishra asserted that focus of disaster management in the future should be moving away from a purely relief focus towards comprehensive disaster management. The disaster management vision of Gujarat is the one where community reacts with sense of urgency in a planned way when the disaster strikes and there is limited death toll, damage to structures and limited impact on the exchequer.

DISASTER MANAGEMENT: LESSONS LEARNED AND STRATEGIES FOR FUTURE

A presentation on lessons learned from the disasters and strategies for future in the Indian context was made by Mr. Anil Sinha IAS, Head of National Center for Disaster Management (NCDM), Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA). He stressed the major lessons learned from the Gujarat earthquake, especially the benefits achieved through empowerment of state authorities like GSDMA. From the statistical data of worldwide disaster events, he pointed out that resources spent on relief, damage repair, restoration, rehabilitation, versus putting a percentage of funds into mitigation were still substantial, with the former getting more attention than the latter.

For instance, in Bhopal case, though thousands of people in the surrounding areas got killed and suffering of thousands continued for almost two decades, there were no deaths and no injuries inside the factory itself. The main reason was that those inside the factory had the crucial knowledge of what to do and what not to do, compared to those outside.

In India context, lessons learned from recent disasters can be summarized as:

- Lack of pre-disaster planning;
- Lack of preparedness at community level;
- Severe damage to habitat sector: no implementation of building regulations;
- Delayed response due to severely damaged infrastructure/ facilities;
- Lack of emergency preparedness.

Disasters can offer unique opportunities for learning and development but experience shows that after the Andhra Cyclone in 1977 and the Latur Earthquake in 1993, the neighboring states, i.e., Orissa and Gujarat did not learn enough lessons. It is not enough for each individual state to be

simply self-sufficient but they have to learn from the neighboring state and in-turn, help them in learning as well. Hazards are inevitable but not every hazard need convert into a disaster.

Based on these lessons and building on the IDNDR's culture of prevention, there had been several initiatives taken by the Government of India such as the constitution of Working Group on Disaster Management, National Committee on Disaster Management, Ministry of Home Affairs' multi-hazard approach, Constitutional, Legislative and Legal Frameworks, Planning Commission and Finance Commission and establishment of new and improved institutional arrangements at state level like OSDMA, GSDMA and Uttaranchal's Disaster Management and Mitigation Center and its Ministry of Disaster Management.

Recent trends indicate the shift of disaster management practices from post-disaster relief towards preparedness and mitigation. Still, "event-to-event syndrome" posed a big challenge and all disaster management practitioners had to work together to overcome these challenges and build a culture of preparedness, quick response, strategic thinking and prevention.

DISASTER RESPONSE IN INDIA: INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AT NATIONAL/ STATE LEVELS – NEW INITIATIVES

Mr. R.K. Singh IAS, Joint Secretary (NDM), Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, presented an overview of disaster response practices in India with respect to the institutional arrangements at national and state levels, and the reorientation and innovation taking place.

He pointed out that every state in the country already had well-established system to deal with disaster management but they did not address all disaster types. In India, the evolution of disaster management had moved from relief to capacity building, training and public awareness campaigns. A continuing challenge is to demonstrate that investment incorporating disaster preparedness and mitigation yields much higher rates of return than that of regular development work only.

One of the main concerns is the effective involvement of all Ministries. Traditionally, this has been the responsibility of only one ministry, but recently, all relevant ministries are being involved in preparedness planning, response and management. Each ministry identifies an emergency response team. At the state level, the Department of Relief and Rehabilitation had been converted to the Department of Disaster Management and forecasting and warning systems are being modernized.

Hazard-specific mitigation programs were being established. In earthquake mitigation, plans for retrofitting of hospitals, bus stands and other critical infrastructure were being developed. In cyclone mitigation, construction of schools with protective features and construction of buildings on high ground were planned. A major upgrading of the response agencies is being planned, including establishment of search and rescue teams at national and state levels; developing an incident command system; strengthening fire services and para-military agencies; establishing pre-positioned caches of equipment and supplies and mobile hospitals.

Mr. Singh also pointed out that local people and villagers were always the first responders in case of a disaster and they needed to be trained in disaster response and management. Plans to develop community based disaster planning and response in states to form village disaster management councils and teams were already underway, with support from UNDP.

DISCUSSION SESSION

Mr. K.C. Kundu, the RCC delegate from Bangladesh raised the question on the type of equipment used at Gujarat after the earthquake and on how they were mobilized. Dr. Mishra explained that earth moving machines; bulldozers and tractors were used, provided by the Government. A resource inventory was required to make it easier for their mobilization. It was notable that not many people were aware of the role of structural engineers in the rehabilitation phase of disaster management.

Adding comments from the Chair, Mr. Jain highlighted the challenge of extending coverage of response agencies in rural areas and small towns. Given resource constraints, there is a need to have volunteer based systems.

In replying to a question on whether fire personnel were involved in training as first responders, Mr. Singh explained about conducting the Collapsed Structure Search and Rescue (CSSR) courses organized by ADPC and other available training programs where firemen were the main target groups.

IV. SESSION II: LESSONS LEARNED FROM RECENT DISASTERS AND PROGRAMS FROM ASIAN COUNTRIES

The session was chaired by Dr. Suvit Yodmani and co-chaired by Mr. Anil Sinha from NCDM, India. This session analysed experiences in disaster preparedness and response to recent disasters as well as new programs in Asian countries, and what general lessons have been learned for broader application.

DISASTER MANAGEMENT IN BANGLADESH

This presentation was made by Mr. K.C. Kundu, Director General, Disaster Management Bureau, Government of Bangladesh. Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MDMR) is the principal government body, overseeing the disaster management activities in the country. Disaster Management Bureau and Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation work directly under the Ministry. Bangladesh has established various disaster management committees at different levels from National Disaster Management Council (NDMC), headed by the Honorable Prime Minister, to the field level committee such as District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC), headed by Deputy Commissioner (DC). Under the supervision of MDMR, there are a number of disaster response units.

Looking to the future, the Government of Bangladesh is working with donors to implement a Comprehensive Disaster Management Program (CDMP) with the aim of further complementing the existing disaster management activities and to attain a more efficient reduction of risk and impact. The main thrust areas would include: Capacity building, Partnership development, Community empowerment, Research and information management and Response management.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM RECENT DISASTERS IN NEPAL

Mr. Chandeshwar Acharya, Deputy Director, Department of Narcotics Control and Disaster Management, Ministry of Home Affairs, Royal Nepal Government, gave a presentation on the lessons learned from disasters in Nepal.

Mr. Acharya reported on the institutional arrangements under the Natural Disaster Relief Act of 1982, and the role played by his department as nodal agency. He reported on the National Action Plan for Disaster Management prepared in 1996 covering four areas: 1) Disaster Preparedness; 2) Response; 3) Reconstruction and Rehabilitation and 4) Disaster Mitigation.

Focusing on disasters in 2002, where 448 lives were lost, 55,337 families affected and 19,162 houses destroyed, he highlighted heroic response efforts. He reported on inherent constraints in the system including rugged and fragile topography, fragile climate, high population density, poor infrastructure, inadequate early warning systems, unplanned settlements and also focused on low preparedness measures and lack of reconstruction activities. Minimal coordination between concerned agencies and the failure to relay disaster related information to the public contributed to the great loss of life and property. Mr. Acharya stressed the need of assistance from international

agencies for technical and managerial support and also firm political commitment for implementation of action plans.

DISASTER RELIEF SITUATION IN CHINA

Deputy Director, Mr. Li Baojun, from Department of Disaster and Social Relief, Ministry of Civil Affairs of China, made a presentation on behalf of China. It gave an overview of natural disaster relief measures in China, which consisted mainly of resettlement, post-disaster assessment and rehabilitation. He reported on 3 features of the country's system namely: unified leadership by the government, delegation of responsibility at various levels and assignment of separate responsibility to different departments. In regards to future challenges, special attention is being paid to strengthening a sound coordination mechanism for all disaster management bodies in the country, intensifying the responsibility of local governments in carrying out relief operations with specific focus on resettlement and rehabilitation and mobilizing volunteers and NGOs to participate in disaster relief operations.

THE PHILIPPINE DISASTER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AND LESSONS LEARNED FROM TROPICAL DEPRESSION "MILENYO"

The presentation from Philippines was made by Ms. R.T. Cabrera, Regional Director from the Office of Civil Defence, Regional Disaster Coordinating Council under the Government of Philippines. The presentation cited the lessons learned from a recent disaster, the tropical depression "Milenyo".

Firstly, Ms. Cabrera described the work of the National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC), with its network of 16 regional, 78 provincial, 114 city and 1,496 municipal disaster coordinating councils functioning around the country. She especially highlighted the comprehensive disaster management framework being adopted. Then, the lessons learned from the tropical depression "Milenyo", that hit the Philippines in August 2002, were shared with the audiences. Six major lessons could be learned from this event:



- The need to strengthen warning systems along areas highly vulnerable to flooding;
- The aggravating effects of denudation and deforestation on flooding;
- The need for continuous capacity building for the local government units;
- The need for continuous capacity building for the local communities;
- Populations living in vulnerable areas to be addressed by the local government;
- The need to improve mitigation and preparedness measures.

V. SESSION III: REGIONAL COOPERATION FOR DISASTER REDUCTION

The third session of the opening day was chaired by Prof A.S Arya, Professor Emeritus, University of Roorkee, with Mr. BMM Mozharul Huq, the Secretary, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, Bangladesh as the co-chair.

UN'S INITIATIVES FOR DISASTER MANAGEMENT IN THE REGION

The initiatives taken by the United Nations for disaster reduction in the region was presented by Mr. Kamal Kishore, Regional Disaster Reduction Advisor, UNDP Bureau of Crisis Prevention and Recovery.

Following initiatives under the framework of United Nations Disaster Management Training program (UNDMTP), partnerships with various disaster management organizations all over the world have been fostered and capacity building projects implemented in the region. With the paradigm shift set off by the IDNDR from relief and response to vulnerability reduction, UNDP is putting more emphasis on community based disaster management (CBDM) programs. Vulnerability reduction is a core area of development agenda for the next 5 years in the country program in India.

WMO has facilitated a couple of processes including the South Asian Regional Tropical Cyclone Panel. It is also working with ICIMOD for the Ganga-Jamuna-Brahmaputra basin. A number of UN agencies have started taking a regional approach rather than individual country approach. A greater partnership with regional organizations is being adopted. Also in South-West Asian countries, a regional approach is being taken up, following the South-West Asian Seminar on Drought held last year in Iran. He emphasized the need for dialogue and to promote integration between disaster reduction and "adaptation" to climate change particularly in the context of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) conference, presently being held in New Delhi.

REGIONAL COOPERATION FOR DISASTER REDUCTION – IMD PERSPECTIVES

The Deputy Director General of India Meteorological Department (IMD), Dr. SR Kalsi, made a presentation on regional cooperation. The presentation gave an overview of the international and regional bodies operating in the region such as World Meteorological Organization (WMO), WMO-ESCAP Tropical Cyclone Panel, and South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). IMD has been recognized in the South Asian region as the specialized regional meteorological center, the regional communication hub where global meteorological information exchange takes place, and within SAARC and its meteorological research center, a focal point for research in climate variability and weather. IMD has a Regional Meteorological Training Center (RMTC) at Pune, India, for imparting training in the field of meteorology. Regional cooperation can be significantly achieved in the area of flood and cyclone management.

REGIONAL COOPERATION IN DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND ROLE OF ADPC

Mr. AJ Rego, Director, Partnerships, Development, Regional Cooperation, Information and Research Division of Asian Disaster Preparedness Center, gave a presentation on the importance of regional cooperation in disaster management and the regional role ADPC played in advocating disaster mitigation.

The ADPC Regional Consultative Committee on Disaster Management (RCC) has been set up with the purpose of promoting regional and sub-regional co-operative programs and has been recognized as a useful mechanism in its previous meetings. As for the regional context, there are a number of existing regional and sub-regional cooperation mechanisms in the Asia-Pacific region, namely: AEGDM, ARF, ICIMOD, MRC, SAARC, and SOPAC as well as NGO networks like Duryog Nivaran, South East Asia Network of NGO in Disaster Management and Red Cross Societies Southeast Asia Regional Response Team. Mr. Rego gave an overview of the work of each of these mechanisms. He particularly highlighted the development of the ASEAN Regional Program on Disaster Management and the Mekong River Commission (MRC) program on Flood Management and Mitigation as two significant regional initiatives in this year. ADPC was closely involved in these initiatives.

Mr. Rego also highlighted ADPC's various training, country and regional programs, particularly the AUDMP, PEER, ECE, which contribute to regional cooperation.

ADRC'S INITIATIVES IN REGIONAL COOPERATION

The presentation from the Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC) was made by Ms. Etsuko Tsunozaki, Senior Researcher, ADRC. The regional role of ADRC can be divided into three main parts: information sharing, capacity building and regional cooperation. Organizing international and specialised expert group meetings, ADRC website offering extensive database access to all its members and partner organizations the up-to-date information on disasters and related issues, contributed to the regional information sharing segment of the organization.

Coordinating with other organizations such as JICA, NDMO of member countries, academic institutions and other NGOs and international organizations, ADRC provided visiting researcher program and conducted training programs in Cambodia, Nepal, Philippines, Singapore and Sri Lanka. In association with ADPC and other international/ regional organizations, ADRC undertook to advocate Total Disaster Risk Management in Asia with a series of meetings and conferences.

DISCUSSIONS

Mr. Huq from Bangladesh expressed his appreciation for the work ADPC has been undertaken and confirmed the keen interest of the Government of Bangladesh in signing an MOU with ADPC. In regard to the regional cooperation, Prof. Arya emphasized that the challenge continued to be effective implementation so that the benefits of regional cooperation could be seen clearly even at the community level.

VI. VALEDICTORY SESSION OF SYMPOSIUM

The valedictory session of the symposium was held at 5:30 pm. Mr. Sompal, Member, Planning Commission and former Agricultural Minister, Government of India, chaired the session.



The keynote address was delivered by Mr. Salvano Briceno, Director of ISDR. He pointed out that, with the rapidly evolving disaster scenario, everyone has to realize that effective culture of prevention can be accomplished through involvement of all concerned parties in intensive collaboration, and by improving awareness and strengthening of managerial and leadership qualities of all actors. Disaster risk reduction needs to be mainstreamed in the development agenda and linked to international movements for climate change adaptation and environmentally sustainable development. ISDR is ready for this endeavor, while maintaining its functions of coordinating advocacy for reducing risks and acting as a clearinghouse for exchange of information. We need to learn from each other's work and need to ensure that speed of capacity enhancement is greater than the rate of increasing vulnerability.

Mr. David Lazarus from UNDP highlighted that reduction of disaster vulnerability is a key ingredient of sustainable development and has now been incorporated as a core component of the UNDP India program. Under this initiative, projects on capacity building of communities to mitigate disaster risks are being initiated as the first step in a national program, the main challenge, however, is to take action now so that impacts are minimal in the future.

Dr. Suvit, in his address, recalled the day's events. The wealth of experience of the host country; the innovative initiatives of the last few years and the planned new directions, provided valuable learning opportunities for other RCC member countries and fulfill the RCC vision of holding meetings in different locations to "learning by seeing". The presentations from RCC member country afforded valuable inputs to Indian institutions and organizations participating in today's

seminar and the review of different initiatives aimed at regional cooperation in disaster management would give valuable insight into deliberations over the next two days of this RCC meeting.

Mr. Sompal gave an eloquent account of his experiences as minister when he had to grapple with disaster management and witnessed too many gaps in disaster response. He expressed caution over apparent structural solutions like dikes, which on the one hand increased inundation on one side and also unrealistically created a false sense of confidence in protection. He talked of the importance of living with floods and droughts and sustainable resource management strategies. He highlighted the need for shelters and raised platforms; location specific hazard resistant designs of structures; ground water development and aquifer recharging programs; crop rotation and soil enhancement strategies and fodder banks as a drought management strategy.

Mr. Anil Sinha, Head, NCDM India, delivered a vote of thanks.

VII. SESSION IV: OVERVIEW OF THE RCC MEETING

This fourth session of the meeting, on the second day of RCC3, was chaired by Dr. Suvit Yodmani and facilitated by Mr. AJ Rego.

Delegates, observers and special speakers introduced themselves, with a brief description of the organizations and countries they were presenting. The agenda was approved without any amendment. It was agreed that there would be no steering committee for this year meeting but instead to employ plenary discussions to keep track of the activities and to ensure the attainment of the meeting objectives.

Dr. Suvit briefed the meeting on the role of RCC and the purpose of the 3rd RCC meeting. He explained that RCC meetings were organized with the vision of its member countries collaborating at technical as well as policy and foreign affairs level. They are also for assessing the needs of its member countries, to encourage regional cooperation, to confirm that ADPC activities are in tune with the identified priority needs of its RCC member countries, to enhance the sustainability of RCC mechanism, and identify ways to mobilize resources.

VIII. SESSION V: FOLLOW-UP OF SUGGESTED ACTION AREAS FOR 2ND RCC

This session was chaired by Honorable Minister Samaraweera and Mr. Dang Quang Tinh and facilitated by Mr. Rego and shared, with the RCC3 attendees, the actions taken by ADPC, following the recommendations of the 2nd RCC meeting.

ACTIONS AREAS SUGGESTED BY 2ND RCC MEETING

Mr. AJ Rego detailed the works carried out by ADPC in following up on the recommendations made at the last RCC meeting. Through various ongoing programs, ADPC incorporated the needs and priority areas identified at RCC2. Major events organized by ADPC were highlighted which included “2nd Consultative Meeting on Total Disaster Risk Management”, “Workshop on Policies, Legal and Institutional Arrangements, and Plans for Disaster Management”, “Regional Workshop on Best Practices in Disaster Mitigation”, “Workshop on Reconstruction Needs Analysis: Planning and Implementation”, “Workshop on Development of ASEAN Regional Program on Disaster Management” and other special training courses and events held during 2002. Plans for Asian Regional Conference and Asian Regional Report on Disaster Reduction were also shared with the participants. A statement on follow-up actions taken are included as **ANNEX V** of this report.

ASEAN REGIONAL PROGRAM ON DISASTER MANAGEMENT (ARPD)

Mr. Rego briefed the participants on the background of the development of ARPD. ADPC was requested to assist in the process and worked closely with ASEAN Expert Group on Disaster Management (AEGDM), the ASEAN member countries and the ASEAN Secretariat through a series of workshops and meetings. The draft program was presented and endorsed at the 12th AEGDM meeting in September 2002 in Hanoi. The components and the sub-components of the program were described to the participants in detail. The program has five major components namely: 1) Cooperation among member countries; 2) Capacity building; 3) Sharing of information and resources; 4) Engaging external partnerships and 5) Public education, awareness and advocacy.

To facilitate the cooperation among member countries, activities include development of an ASEAN response action plan, enhancing national quick response teams, undertaking specialized training and joint simulation exercises, conducting a series of technical cooperation and specific hazard reduction projects. The capacity building component of the framework covers development of an ASEAN disaster management training institutes network and joint specialized training courses.

Sharing of information and resources among member countries call for formation of DISCNET: Disaster Management Information Sharing and Communication Network including an AEGDM website, inventory of experts and a hazard and vulnerability mapping project. In terms of enhancing external partnerships, especially with international agencies and NGOs, ASEAN plan to widely publicize the ARPD document and seek funding support. Public awareness and advocacy focus on national activities by declaring 26th of June as ASEAN Day for Disaster Reduction, integration of disaster management in the school curriculum and mainstreaming of disaster management in national development planning.

Mr. Tinh complimented ADPC for its work in the development of the framework and commented that for natural disaster management activities in a country, the most important thing was to build the local capacity to respond and manage these hazards. Vietnam is currently chair of AEGDM and for the publication of AEGDM newsletter, all the ASEAN countries were requested to provide information and materials. ADPC was also requested to assist the chair in the development of the AEGDM website. Mr. Rego added that ADPC felt privileged to work with ASEAN. Even though the framework was a bit ambitious it could serve as a useful model for other sub-regional bodies and called for member countries and international communities assistance in helping realize these components.

LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT WORKSHOP

It was strongly recommended at RCC2 that ADPC take a role of facilitating documentation and dissemination of innovations in legal and institutional arrangements and planning for Disaster Management. In April 2002, in Bangkok, ADPC held a regional workshop on "Policies, Legal and Institutional Arrangements, and Plans for Disaster Management" to take stock of the current status and experience in the region. Mr. Rego made a short presentation on the objectives and the outcomes of the workshop and the next steps to be taken. The recommended action plans comprised of organizing workshops at state, provincial, national, sub-regional, and regional levels in selected countries, development of a publication, consultation with the Regional Consultative Committee (RCC), development of a research agenda and to have continued dialogues with politicians and policy-makers. Proposed plans involved in each of these priority areas were also presented.

DISCUSSION

With regards to linking disaster management component in the national development plans, Mr. Sinha said that for country like India, though it was recognized as very important, it has not been completely integrated and would like to hear about other countries' experiences and asked whether there were any models in this region that can be referred to.

Mr. Rego replied that this was the main purpose of taking the publication forward. At earlier RCC meetings, it was reported that China has developed a national disaster reduction plan covering the period of 1998-2010 with specific mitigation objectives.

Mr. Sinha then raised the question of where we stand in terms of implementation and whether there were any predetermined timeframe. Mr. Rego explained the situation that ADPC is currently undertaking editing documents received and this is expected to continue the next year. A draft research agenda identifying what further needs to be done has been prepared. By the first quarter of next year, March 2003, ADPC hopes to have a first outline of what can be done.

ADVOCACY FOR TOTAL DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT

Mr. Rego presented a paper on ADPC's regional initiatives in advocating Total Disaster Risk Management and reported the outcomes and the proposed follow up actions of the 2nd Consultative Meeting on Total Disaster Risk Management from June 13-14 2002, organized in Bangkok jointly by ADPC, ADRC and UNOCHA.

WORKSHOP ON "BEST PRACTICES IN DISASTER MITIGATION"

Mr. Arambepola made a presentation on the regional workshop ADPC organized from 24-26 September 2002 in Indonesia. The Regional Workshop on Best Practices in Disaster Mitigation was held with the objective of showcasing best practices and sharing experiences and lessons learned in protecting and strengthening societies through the Asian Urban Disaster Mitigation Program (AUDMP) and other initiatives.

The workshop consisted of seven major themes for presentations and discussions: Policy, Legal and Institutional Arrangements, Hazard Mapping and Risk Assessment, Capacity Building, Mitigation Planning and Implementation, Promoting Safer Building Construction, Community Based Approaches to Disaster Mitigation, and Climate Applications and Preparedness. Key issues under each theme were reported. A copy of the proceedings would be sent to all RCC members.

ADPC PRIMER ON URBAN DISASTER MITIGATION

A presentation on the proposed ADPC primer on urban disaster mitigation was made by Mr. NMSI Arambepola, Program Manager, Asian Urban Disaster Mitigation Program and he welcomed views on concepts developed till now.

There had been substantial advancements in outputs and lessons learned from the projects implemented by ADPC in the past and experiences of the project partners. These have been shared and showcased by ADPC at a variety of forums and events such as RCC1, RCC2 and annual Regional Lessons Learned Workshops, etc. The Primer would serve as state-of-the-art guide for practitioners and as a reference by analyzing and presenting good practices in urban disaster mitigation in Asia.

The Primer will draw from recent experiences, good practices, lessons learned in UDM from AUDMP, other programs of ADPC and from individuals and institutions dealing with aspects of UDM within and outside Asia. There were altogether 17 potential themes identified for the framework.



Questionnaires were distributed to all the participants on the development of the Primer soliciting inputs on purpose, format, target audience, coverage, content and distribution. Feedback was received from several meeting participants.

DISCUSSION

A remark was made by Mr. Sinha that the holistic approach is even more relevant for urban context. The use of GIS based mapping techniques is important and useful so they should be taken into consideration. Regarding the publication on similar topics, Mr. Sinha requested for clarifications on the earlier publications not mentioned in the presentation.

Mr. Arambepola clarified that these included Organization of American States (OAS) primer on disaster mitigation focused mainly on hazard and risk assessment, published prior to 1990, the 1999 publications from the Caribbean and FEMA; and the 2002 ISDR publication.

As a background material for ADPC's Primer on urban disaster mitigation, Mr. Sinha made a suggestion to add the experience of Global Earthquake Safety Initiative. The suggestion was welcome.

IX. SESSION VI: LESSONS LEARNED FROM RECENT DISASTERS & PROGRAMS

Session VI was the continuation of the session II from the first day, mainly comprising of country presentations by RCC member countries. It was divided into morning and afternoon sessions, with Mr. K.C. Kundu and Mr. Li Baojun chairing with Mrs. Zen Delica Willison facilitating the morning session. Full copies of these papers are available on request from the countries and ADPC.

DISASTER MANAGEMENT IN CAMBODIA

Mr. Peou Samy, Secretary General of the Cambodian National Committee for Disaster Management, made a presentation on Disaster Management in Cambodia. The country is hit by a range of hazards from floods, drought, fire, tropical storms to riverbank erosion. National Committee for Disaster Management (NCDM) is the leading functional body for disaster management works in the Kingdom of Cambodia. Its role is to coordinate with the ministries of Royal Government, UN agencies, International Organizations, NGOs, international communities, national associations and local donors, to make recommendations to the Royal Government to issue principles, main policies and instructions on disaster preparedness and management and to strengthen capacities of provincial/ municipal/ district disaster management entities.

Mr. Samy reported on the two main disasters that devastated the country in year 2002: drought and flood, and social and economic impacts caused by them. Altogether 738,653 families were affected by these hazards with total cost of damage amounted to US\$28 million. Action undertaken by NCDM included assessment of the post disaster situation, dispatch of rescue teams, deployment of mobile houses and distribution of seedlings. Four sub-groups of the Emergency Response Group have been established on emergency relief, food security, health and water and sanitation.

DISCUSSION

Dr. Suvit enquired about the responsible personnel for provincial level work. Mr. Samy explained that provincial Governor is responsible at that level.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM WILDFIRES IN MONGOLIA

Major General Urjin, Chief, State Board for Civil Defence of Mongolia, made a presentation on one of the most frequent and devastating disasters in Mongolia: wildfires, which has destroyed million hectares of forest, grassland and thousands of livestock.

The Civil Defence field headquarters or Emergency Operation Center was set up in the territory of one of the affected aimags (provinces) in order to provide general control and coordination of the response measures, allocate the disaster relief resources and manage fire-fighting operations on site.

From all those distressing wildfires experiences, it was recognized that modernized fire-fighting management, organization and planning, improved coordination and co-action of resources as well as intensified firefighting campaign were greatly essential for effective firefighting and preparedness.



Several significant initiatives have been taken since then. In order to advance fire-fighting operations at national level, a law on the “Forest and Steppe Fire Protection” was adopted by Parliament of Mongolia in 1996. National events such as a meeting on “Lessons learnt from wildfires” and National Workshop on the “Intensification of forest and steppe fire prevention and suppression” were organized in 1997 and 1998 respectively. Moreover, rewards were offered to those provinces that have prevented fire outbreaks during the whole seasons or decreased number of wildfires by 50%. Along with this, the Government of Mongolia approved a “National Program on Natural Disaster Reduction” in 1999. During the last few years the State Standing Emergency Commission initiated wildfire prevention measures through means of mass media and fire fighting drills both at national and local levels. The Commission also provided fire-fighting tools and communication equipment to several most fire

prone villages. Concerning Emergency Planning, Civil Defence Plan was renewed in 1997-1998 while National Civil Defence Plan was revised and approved by the Prime Minister of Mongolia in November 1998. Along with this, fire-fighting brigades were established in all province of the country. Enhanced radio and communication systems were also installed. In conclusion, Maj. Gen. Urjin stressed the need for expansion of international cooperation in order to enhance the firefighting capacity in countries, as there were still huge unmet needs.

DISCUSSION

Dr. Suvit offered the Mongolia Government an assistance from ADPC, in collaboration with Australian Fire Services through the Melbourne Fire and Emergency Services Board (MFESB), to assist in identifying needs in capacity building for fire services to deal with wildfires in Mongolia. Col. Urjin welcomed ADPC’s offer to work with both organizations and promised to follow up this proposal with the Government of Mongolia.

Mrs. Delica of ADPC made inquiries on public awareness component of strategic planning in Cambodia. Mr. Samy answered that activities are being done in association with various stakeholders. For the 5 year disaster management plan, there are two main thrusts; firstly to build the capacities at national and provincial levels and secondly to reduce loss of lives and properties.

Mr. Tinh commented that many of the disasters in Asia take a regional toll. Therefore, regional cooperation and sharing of experiences, collective wisdom and capacities are essential in reducing the risks. To realize this vision, consent from countries in the region are required and for Mekong Delta, the concerned nations have to come together to strengthen the flood preparedness and mitigation measures in the Delta. To initiate the process, Mr. Tinh suggested a joint meeting of flood affected provinces in Cambodia and Vietnam in Mekong region to share experiences regarding the floods. ADPC, he requested, should take the lead role in organizing it and it need not be a national scale but rather a provincial level activity.

In reply to Mr. Tinh’s suggestion, Mr. Samy said that cooperation is most welcome and this offer will be presented to the Prime Minister and the First Vice President of NCDM-Cambodia, H.E. Mr. Nhim Vanda, for consideration.

In accordance with Mr. Tinh’s suggestion and Mr. Samy’s agreement, Dr. Suvit assured the countries that ADPC would do its best to assist in making this meeting happen. Dr. Suvit also

recommended inclusion of MRC in this discussion even though MRC does not have a mandate for operations at provincial levels.

This session was continued in the afternoon with Major General Urjin and Mr. Acharya chairing the session with Mr. Arambepola as the facilitator.

EMERGENCY AGENCY OF REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN'S DIRECTIONS OF COOPERATION WITH THE ASIAN DISASTER PREPAREDNESS CENTER

Mr. N. Bizhanov, First Deputy Chairman, Emergency Agency of Republic of Kazakhstan, presented a paper on development of coordination between Emergency Agency of Republic of Kazakhstan and ADPC.

Kazakhstan, being a country subjected to diverse natural and man-made disasters, is keen to develop wide ranging cooperation with the Asian countries on prevention and minimization of impact of emergencies of both natural and man-made character. One of the priority area for cooperation was development of disaster management related laws and legislation of Kazakhstan. Currently, there are no legislative regulations in insurance of life, health and property at emergencies. Mr. Bizhanov conveyed the nation's keen interest in the condition and perspectives of existing legislation and state monitoring systems in the other countries of the region.

The greatest annual threat to Kazakhstan is posed by spring high waters, the floods of the Caspian Sea and mudflows. To counter that, creation of a specialized engineering group in each region of the country is one of the actions. Another imminent disaster the country is currently facing is desertification. Around 66 % of the country is occupied by either deserts or half-deserts. Within the last 60 years, the Aral Sea has slowly dried up, its area decreasing from 68 thousand square kilometer to 32 thousand square kilometer. Wind blown salts from this region destroy several previously flourishing deltas of large rivers. International funds have been set aside for saving of Aral. In this context, Mr. Bizhanov offered to provide ADPC with all available information on this case to disseminate to other countries to enable them to avoid similar disasters.

Kazakhstan currently enjoys close cooperation with Japan and China, as well as its counterparts in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Russia. In an attempt to enrich the capacities of its disaster management expertise, Kazakhstan is sending its experts to foreign educational centers including ADPC. Mr. Bizhanov also offered to assist ADPC in establishing contacts with countries in the Caspian states.

DISASTER AND MANAGEMENT IN BHUTAN

A paper on the above subject; prepared for presentation by Ms. Tshering Phuntsho of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Royal Government of Bhutan, was circulated to the participants. Bhutan, in the heart of the Himalayas with a population of 700,000, has well preserved natural heritage and biodiversity. Major natural disasters experienced are landslides, particularly in rainy season, earthquakes, floods in the foothills and glacial lake outbursts. Also experienced are forest fires, crop disasters and pest outbreaks. A recent major disaster reported was the floods in Phuntshiling in August 2000, which claimed 49 lives, damaged infrastructure and industrial facilities. In February 2002, the entire Yangthang village with 25 houses was burnt. Lessons learned focused on the need to develop policy and establish national district and block-wise committees and to look at traditional construction, which uses wood and builds in close clusters. Priority areas identified for action are identification of a focal ministry, a task force, financial allocation and training of district and block level committees.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM FLOODS IN MEKONG RIVER DELTA OF VIETNAM

This presentation was by Mr. Dang Quang Tinh from Vietnam. Mr. Tinh is the Director of the Department of Dike Management, Flood and Storm Control under the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

The presentation focused specifically on the Mekong River Delta of Vietnam, its annual flood experiences and the lessons learned. The strategy for communities in the delta has always been to live with floods. Six provinces are affected by these annual flooding. In year 2002 alone, flood damages caused 72,860 houses to be inundated with about 106 casualties, 99 of whom were children. Around 6,432 ha of summer-autumn rice crop was damaged.

Department of Dike Management, Flood and Storm Control has developed and implemented measures for communities in the vulnerable areas to live with floods. The measures include:

- Developing special residential areas, including relocation to safer areas, raising the height of roads and designing flood prone houses;
- Shifting of cropping calendar, trying to get 3 crops instead of 2;
- Setting up of emergency kindergarten for children to keep them occupied in flood season;
- Provision of flood safety training for children.

Providing swimming lessons at school and incorporation of disaster management in school curriculum can be implemented. The adverse effects from floods can be turned around into opportunities by putting in place proper preparedness and mitigation measures. The main priority should be the safety of people and assist them to be able to work in all seasons. New cottage industries and handicraft skills should be developed to enable them to continue their livelihoods even during floods.



As immediate measures, evacuation, relief and rehabilitation activities are recommended for mitigating the flood disaster in Mekong Delta. For long-term measures, it was recommended to continue work on construction of transportation, development of residential clusters, regular assessment of land-use planning, new crop schedule, planning for appropriate dike system, post-flood assessments, continuous improvements of flood preparedness and mitigation measures and organizing workshops and similar events for sharing of experiences and lessons learned in accordance with “Live with Floods” policy. This includes, in particular, moving from flood prevention to flood exploitation – recognizing floods as a natural resource that needs to be exploited for local socio-economic development. Thus, in addition to flood proofing of infrastructure, we need to encourage aquatic production, fishing and services to boost people’s income during floods.

DISASTER MANAGEMENT IN THAILAND

Mr. Arak Putrakool, Deputy Director General, Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation presented the Thailand experience. The presentation gave insight of the current as well as planned work, capacities and activities of the newly established Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, under the Ministry of Interior. According to the severity of a disaster, authority operating at different functional levels will intervene, starting with local authority, then provincial Governor and ultimately the Ministry of Interior.

There are 2,272 people currently working in the department, which oversees the works of 5 Bureaus and 12 Field Operation Centers. Being a new department, there still are a lot of requirements that need to be fulfilled. Enhanced training facilities are needed in several areas along with safety equipment for the rescue workers. Facilities in GIS and IT need upgrading. Improvements in networking and increased coordination with international organizations, NGOs and research and development also prove to be vital. He looked forward to closer cooperation with ADPC and other member countries in building capacity of his department.

DISCUSSION

Mr. Arambepola, the facilitator of the session gave a brief overview of the session. He pointed out that mitigation and preparedness phases of disaster management were the most important in enabling the community to counter the adverse effects of any hazards. As mentioned by Mr. Tinh in his presentation, it was not only structural measures that were crucial but also non-structural measures like land use planning in flood prone areas that are needed. We have seen Thailand embarking on new policies and emergence of a new and specialized department overseeing national disaster management activities. These were the examples of incorporation of disaster management issue in the development plans.

Dr. Suvit posed a question to Mr. Bizhanov on reference to legal base and the need to revise the law in Kazakhstan. In reply, he was informed that legal arrangements for disaster management practices have been set up since 1991. But there was still a need to further develop insurance policies and related legislation.

Mr. Huq praised Vietnam in its efforts to implement measures on living with floods. He sought information on the means and ways Vietnam has used in order to reduce the flood-submerged areas. Mr. Tinh corrected that there were no reduction in the flood-submerged areas only that the crop patterns were changed.

Mr. Huq congratulated Mr. Arak for coming up with such a good paper in such a short time, considering the recent establishment of the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation and praised the Thai Government on setting up of the new institutional arrangement.

Dr. Suvit commented that the name of the department alone is encouraging as it puts so much emphasis on “prevention and mitigation”. Mr. Acharya reminded that when looking at disasters, we have to look beyond boundaries of nations and recognize it as a global problem. Going down to the grassroots level would be the most effective way to safeguard the lives of communities at risk.

X. SESSION VII: CAPACITY BUILDING OF NATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS – PRIORITIZING FUTURE ACTION AREAS

This session was chaired by Mr. Peou Samy and Ms. Cabrera and facilitated by Mrs. Zen Delica Willison and discussed the results of the questionnaire send out by ADPC on needs and capacities for disaster management training in RCC member countries.

APPROACH

Mrs. Delica stressed on the need to identify ‘capacity building’, rather than ‘training needs’, so as to identify the sum total of whatever abilities, knowledge and skills are required by various target groups for effective management of disasters. For this purpose, ADPC sent out questionnaire to all the RCC member and delegates, prior to the meeting, which sought identification of groups needing capacity building and types of training needed.

From the questionnaire, key target groups needing capacity building were identified as:

- Affected communities
- Disaster managers
- District committees
- Local Civil Defence officers
- Local Red Cross Societies officials and volunteers
- Media person
- NDMO staff

- NGO staff
- Police and military officers and
- Volunteers.

Types of training courses, for the above-mentioned groups were recognized as:

- Community Based Disaster Management
- Damage and Needs Assessment
- Disaster Planning
- Emergency Response
- General disaster management courses
- Information Gathering, Analysis and Dissemination
- Public Awareness and Public Education
- Search and Rescue
- Training for Trainers and
- Total Disaster Risk Management.

Delegates were divided into 3 working groups on regional basis:

- South-East Asia (Cambodia, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam)
- South Asia (Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka).
- Central, East and West Asia (China, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Mongolia),

Groups were asked to prioritize target groups and kind of training required from a national and sub-regional perspective.

The observers were requested to join any group of their interest.

WORKING GROUP DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION

The **South East Asia working group** presentation was made by Mr. Tinh from Vietnam. The main training needs were identified as per country. For Cambodia and Vietnam, basic disaster management training for community leaders and district committee official topped the list while for Thailand, training for officers at national, province and community levels from the newly formed department on general disaster management and planning would be most appropriate. As for Philippines, specialised skill training for search and rescue workers and other first responders was a priority training need, as well as public awareness campaigns for vulnerable populations.



Discussion results of the **South Asia working group** was presented by Mr. Huq of Bangladesh. The training courses required were prioritized as follows:

- Training of trainers at national, provincial, district, sub-district and community (Panchayat/ Union Parishad/ village) levels
- Training for communities on response.

The need for a national level training curriculum development exercise was also highlighted.

The key target groups were identified as school children (Grades 6-10), specialist team (health professionals, fire services, search and rescue workers, engineers, architects), officers from NGOs and government agencies, and media, with themes covering mobilization of resources, search and rescue, emergency management as well as hazard specific courses depending on the region. The group also strongly encouraged that all government employees should receive a module on disaster management as part of foundation and refresher training. The group identified the pre-requisites for the successful delivery of these training courses as the skills and knowledge for vulnerability and

impact analysis; existence of early warning systems; database of available response resources; local contingency and response plans and the need for legislative backup.

Mr. Brian Parry of MFESB reported the results of the **Central, East and West Asia working group** discussion. The group focused their discussions on identifying priorities for the primer. Emergency response was named as one of the most important areas especially in coordination between various crucial players such as army, NGOs and local organizations. In terms of public awareness, educating school children lays a long-term basis while training of media personnel on the basic of disaster mitigation and management is important to turn media from a problem to a resource. A neglected area is gender. Primer should not be generic and not assume balance between genders, but recognize cultural and societal differences. Finally, the local official should be able to think how his decisions are going to affect the post disaster reconstruction and rehabilitation processes. Therefore, dealing with that particular subject is also equally important.

Mrs. Delica gave a brief summary of the session concluding that the priorities of RCC member countries in capability building lay mainly in the areas of

- Emergency response and coordination
- Reconstruction and rehabilitation.
- Training of trainers
- Disaster management orientation of different stakeholders
- Damage assessment and needs analysis
- Specialised workshops on planning and
- Public awareness (main target group: school children).

In identifying the areas of priority, Mr. Samy called the participants' attention to exchange of data and information between the organizations functioning at local level. In Cambodia, the local NGOs and Cambodian Red Cross share disaster management information. Furthermore, Cambodian Government and IFRC got together and prepared a 5-year strategic plan, which recommended the need for capacity building and focus on disaster risk and vulnerability reduction programs. Cambodia is focusing on reduction of losses at community level by building their capacity and promoting disaster management.

Mr. Sinha pointed out that we need to keep focused on capacity building of national systems and highlighted that institutions at the sub-national levels are extremely weak or absent. Mr. Rego recalled that capacity building of national systems and identified 10 priority areas have been discussed in detail at earlier RCC meetings. It entails various things such as legal and institutional arrangements and mitigation planning, information systems, etc. In this exercise, we narrow down our focus to capability building needs. Questionnaires were sent out to all RCC member countries to obtain key inputs. In the questionnaire, there was a question on existing institutions in the countries, their needs for upgrading and role of ADPC in assisting them in achieving that goal. This questionnaire would serve as input into developing a cooperative project, which reflects the needs and priorities of RCC member countries in the field of capability building.

Mr. Peou Samy and Ms. Cabrera thanked all the presenters and all those participated in the discussion.

XI. SESSION VIII: TRENDS AND ADVANCES IN DROUGHT PREPAREDNESS AND MANAGEMENT

This session was held on 31 October 2002 and was chaired by Mr. Kundu and Mr. Arak Putakool and facilitated by Mr. AR Subbiah and Mr. Glen Dolcemascolo of ADPC.

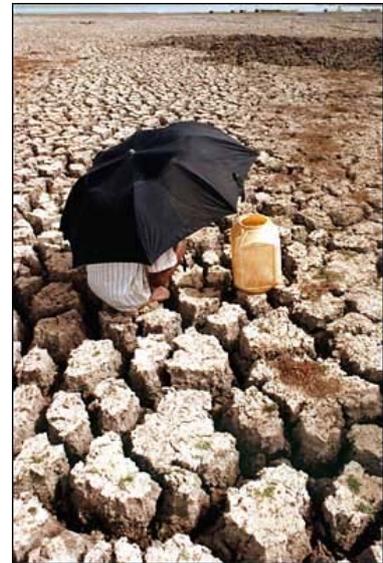
This session consisted of three segments:

- Country presentations
- Existing regional initiatives and
- Plenary discussion on regional cooperation in drought management.

The session started with introductory remarks from co-chairs.

Mr. Mohan Kanda IAS, Special Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India, delivered a keynote address at the opening of the session. Mr. Kanda pointed out that drought had a three-dimensional character. The most direct and immediate impact can be seen on livelihood of communities and cases of hunger and deprivation of nourishment. The second effect falls on the primary production systems such as cultivation and cropping patterns. The third and final blow is on the economy of the country. These factors are interlinked with one another and response from our side should center on sustaining the livelihoods of the communities. Therefore, a comprehensive support system for farmers is required. As far as the economy is concerned, corrective measures should be taken to recover from the harmful impact on macro-economic system.

Dealings with droughts are always paradoxical. Even though drought is termed as a disaster, it is not handled in the same way we do with other disasters, which make us inadequately prepared when the time comes. Drought is eminently predictable. We should have a ‘what-when-where’ matrix where we can anticipate flash points and should be able to respond better. In dealing with the current year’s drought, we have benefited from the extensive documentation of the 1987 droughts.



History has evidenced that drought are best coped with when there is a long-term planning scheme. Learning from history is important. For instance, we can learn from the water harvesting techniques of ancient days, where water reservoirs with links to one another were created and runoff was controlled so that water was available for drinking and irrigation in the second cropping season. But we do not have that kind of system today. We need twin-track approach where immediate as well as long terms applications are developed in parallel. It is also to be remembered that all the drought management measures have to be done in participatory, holistic and coordinated manner. Genuine efforts to involve communities are essential. In this regard, we have to recognize the crucial role NGOs and community organizations have played and be ready as Governments to cede space to non-state actors. We must recognize that political boundaries are not respected by the vagaries of nature, and drought occurs across national boundaries in a region with a shared geography and climate. It is necessary for us to clearly understand how we can learn from events beyond our borders not merely at the points of pooling and sharing experiences but also at working together. He, therefore, welcomed the session and urged it to take a regional approach.

COUNTRY PRESENTATIONS

Drought Management and Initiatives in Sri Lanka

This presentation from Sri Lanka was made by Mr. ND Hettiarachi, Director of National Disaster Management Center, Ministry of Social Welfare, Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka can be divided into two major zones, the wet and the dry zones. The dry zone lies mainly in the northwest and southwest of the island and it occupies almost 64% of the country’s territory.

Drought in Sri Lanka take different dimensions. Locally significant droughts occur in some parts of the country every year while severe droughts of national scale occurs once in every 10-15 years.

Regionally, droughts occur every 3-4 years. In 2001, severe and prolonged drought affected 7 districts, with approximately 354,015 families facing the threat. The increasing scarcity in food and water created by drought prompted the Government to take measures and drought relief and rehabilitation programs were implemented. The prime objectives of the program are to uplift the living conditions of low-income groups in the drought affected areas of last year, to provide the communities in the drought affected areas with basic infrastructure facilities, to appraise the affected people of coping mechanisms to mitigate the impact of drought in future and to create sustainable development through self-reliance.

Under this program, the main areas of activity undertaken include: reconstruction of small tanks, repairing canals and bunds, construction of agricultural roads, completion of any other activity connected with agriculture that can be done by utilizing labor, small scale forestry projects and community based small scale Development Projects selected from the area.

The selected development projects are reconstruction of abandoned water reservoirs, repair of bunds and construction of agricultural roads to improve access to agriculture fields which benefited 25,952 families. Construction of agrowells, introducing of modern techniques in crop irrigation systems and implementing community based awareness programs are part of the programs to mitigate the impact of droughts. Longer-term measures such as diversion of river waters, seawater purification and education in afforestation and preservation of bio-diversity are also planned.

DISCUSSIONS

Mr. Kundu noted that the most important preparedness measure for drought is to preserve abundant water in wet season to be used in the dry season. It is simple as it can be done using afforestation.

Mr. Sinha remarked that the drought patterns of India and Sri Lanka seem different. The last major drought in India was in 1987. During droughts, the first major problem is usually migration of people, secondly, the malnutrition and thirdly, loss of fodder for animals. As corrective measures, Indian government has built fodder banks for animals. Mr. Sinha inquired about the existence of similar problems in Sri Lanka.

Mr. Hettiarachi mentioned that 2001 drought brought about migration of people from drought-affected districts of Hambantota, Moneragala, and Ratnapura to other areas. The Sri Lanka Drought Relief and Rehabilitation program initiated the distribution of nutritious food baskets to the drought victims. The main objective of the program described is to change the relief syndrome of the people. Mr. Sinha also raised the question on the empowerment of local authority and local organizations similar to what India is doing presently. Honorable Minister Samaraweera stated that similar activities have been carried out in Sri Lanka by the Government. Relief was offered but communities had to organize their own activities and had to work to earn it. Communities as well as other local organizations, with support from NGOs, were involved in reservoir buildings and other activities.

There were concern on the maintenance of drought relief infrastructure and the community capacity to deal with forthcoming droughts. In reply, Mr. Hettiarachi explained that Sri Lanka is planning to build permanent irrigation schemes where river water will be diverted to the affected areas.

A question was raised on how drought was defined in Sri Lanka and at what stage the government gave the declaration of drought situation in the relevant areas. The question also requested more elaborate explanation on how the improper land use affect drought. In Sri Lanka, the Government published a special circular, which stated that two successive failure of crops due to lack of rain would be declared as drought situation. People sometimes use forestland for growing crops, which leads to deforestation, a major contributing factor for causing drought.

Mr. Huq had a question on the implementation of the World Food Program's projects in Sri Lanka. He wanted to know whether food itself or cash has been distributed. In Bangladesh, programs like

food for education and food for work has been implemented. But in the recent years, it was found out that food sometimes did not reach the affected communities and he would like to know if the same situation occurred in Sri Lanka. Mr. Hettiarachi replied that food for work program was implemented. Well-organized administrative mechanism plus thorough monitoring ensured that help reached the victims.

Drought and Desertification in Jordan

Lt. Col. Khader, Manager – General Secretariat of Jordan Civil Defence, gave a presentation on drought and desertification in Jordan and counter measures implemented so far.

In Jordan, approximately 91% of country receives less than 200 mm of rain every year. In addition to low rainfall, other factors such as rock mining, over cutting of trees, encroachment of construction on agricultural land, unplanned expansion of farming, overgrazing and soil erosion also contribute to causing drought. As drought control measures, the Jordanian Government has developed projects in various parts of the country namely: grass land development, Alhammad Valley project, Al Safawi plan to identify irrigation and drinking water, build desert dams and pools to augment agriculture output in the arid areas and improve irrigation resources, Wadi Arabaa' project which involves planting of Vetch and Barley trees, protecting Jordanian oases, waste water treatment and purification, artificial rain project and annual celebration of tree day where million of new trees get planted.



Jordan's initiatives in drought management also consists of bilateral cooperation with its neighboring countries such as Israel and Syria, especially in sharing and supply of much needed water resources. Moreover, Jordan has formed a counter desertification committee consisting of government ministries of Agriculture, Water and Irrigation, Environment Protection Establishment, Council for Science and Technology as well as academic institutions and NGOs. The Ministry of Interior, with its Supreme Council of Civil Defence forms a seasonal committee to calculate the animal wealth in order to import animal feed in the dry seasons. The plan to tackle forest fires to prevent damage to grasslands is also in place.

However, there still are a number of issues that need to be addressed. In Jordan in particular, legislation on land use classification should be strengthened and issued. Construction of dams, encouraging people to use indigenous ways to harvest rainwater, and supporting studies on improved use of grassland are also equally important. In regional and global context, development of a worldwide database on scientific studies and practices on drought phenomena and collaboration between national organizations, international organizations and NGOs are very much in need, particularly linked to activities for control of desertification.

Indian Experience in Drought Management

An overview of drought management in one of the states of India, Orissa, was made by Mr. Balakrishnam, Relief Commissioner of the state of Orissa. The presentation highlighted the fact that in 2002, the monsoon rainfall in India was 19% below normal with critical July rainfall recording at lowest ever, which led to the occurrence of drought in several states of the country affecting 29% of its land area. Orissa was one of the states hit by drought. Mr. Balakrishnam pointed out that the 2002 drought in Orissa should be viewed not in isolation against the background of recurring hazards of floods and cyclones and inherent vulnerability with 60% of population below the poverty line.

A key part of the effective drought management framework is to have an assessment system in place to systematically collect and analyze data on indicators of meteorological, hydrological and

agricultural drought, i.e., rainfall, river and reservoir levels and irrigation availability and crop conditions. Many major and medium irrigation systems and all the rivers of Orissa were rain-fed and this year less than normal rainfall made them not able to service the command areas fully. Effective tracking and data analysis, field visits and cabinet review led to early declaration of drought and initiation of early action. Orissa state government's strategies and interventions covered protecting food security by enhancing its availability in the public distribution system (PDS) and accessibility, creation of wage employment and food for work programs covering drought proofing and creation/renovation of water bodies, protective irrigation including subsidizing of hiring pumps and crop insurance, input subsidy and alternative cropping pattern for the agriculture sector. The schemes required the interdepartmental coordination and also with Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and NGOs especially in the areas of rainwater harvesting structure, supplementary nutrition feeding and food for work programs.

As part of administrative response, the Government of Orissa has constituted a cabinet sub-committee. Comprehensive instructions have been issued to collectors to ensure the food security and district level mitigation plans are developed. Arrangements for field visits of senior government officials, crop insurance and improved PDS and advance health measures are also covered. The Government also carries out monitoring and outcome assessment based on periodic reports, data from the field on measurable indicators related to starvation, malnutrition, mitigation, health and prices and through feedback from various stakeholders. There is increased use of IT and GIS and standardization of formats, to facilitate easy assessment and reporting.

The Commissioner concluded with a suggested framework for regional cooperation, encouraging the all the concerned organizations, regional institutions and universities to work together to enhance regional agricultural trade and mobility of resources.

EXISTING REGIONAL INITIATIVES

Drought Management: Regional Perspectives

A presentation on regional perspectives on drought management was made by Mr. AR Subbiah from ADPC. Between 1997 and 2001, many countries in Asian continent experienced drought in varying degrees of intensity. The affected countries included Afghanistan, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Mongolia, Pakistan, Philippines, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Tajakistan, Thailand, and Vietnam. Asia is more severely affected than Africa because of higher populations. The Governments of those nations, in partnership with various international organizations and NGOs, have put in place measures for drought management, mainly for relief and response. Despite all these efforts, change in cropping patterns, increase in crop intensity, urbanization, improper water resource management, economic and industrial development, increase in population and climate change have aggravated frequency intensity and magnitude of impacts of drought. Why is that so that even though we are more technologically advanced but still the impacts are increasing? While major low frequency wide spread droughts receive attention, the localized high frequency droughts are not paid as much attention as they deserve.

However, the increased application of climate information to understand weather patterns and their impact on socio-economic systems could enable policy makers and other end users to anticipate and prepare for and respond to drought more effectively. For instance, the use of El Nino and Southern Oscillation (ENSO) prediction tools, in water resource management and alternate cropping strategy development at national, provincial and farm levels. There still are various gaps to realize the full potential of such a system. Localized impacts exist and there is a need to interpret and use this information. It required close cooperation from a large number of stakeholders ranging from climate information producers, intermediary research organizations who interpret, translate and communicate climate information to policy makers and end users. An institutional mechanism needs to be developed to ensure continuous dialogue among all stakeholders to produce and apply climate forecast information for mitigation the impact of droughts.

Local institutions need to be strengthened to make use of global climate forecast information for local use. Communication strategies need to be developed to communicate probabilistic forecast to users. Formation of regional networks can enhance the regional exchange of information as well as increase the support to nations for addressing gaps in the end-to-end climate information and application system.

In this aspect, regional cooperation can be in the area of exchanging experiences, knowledge and information through fora and meetings. There is need to incorporate climate information and its associated shocks into development program to ensure livelihood security of communities living in high drought risk zones in Asia.

Drought Monitoring Center – Nairobi (DMCN)

This presentation was made by Mr. Sospeter Muiruri, Deputy Director of DMCN.

The Drought Monitoring Center – Nairobi (DMCN) was established in 1989, with the objective of contributing to monitoring, prediction, early warning and mitigation of adverse impacts of extreme climatic events on agricultural production, food security, livestock, water resources, energy, health, and the other major socio-economic sectors of the region. DMCN serves the countries in Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and other countries in the Horn of Africa. There is another center in Harare, responsible for countries in Southern Africa. The activities of DMCN cover timely acquisition, monitoring and dissemination of climate information and early warning products, development of public awareness and educational materials, capacity building, research and enhancement of climate forecasting applications. Up to present, DMCN has assisted governments of its member countries in formulation of policy paper, upgraded computing and communication facilities among member countries, provided the sub-region with weather and climate advisories and more importantly timely advance warnings on droughts, floods and other extreme climate events, implemented pilot projects and enhanced networking with various institutions at national, regional and international levels. Nevertheless, in order to achieve a more effective drought monitoring and prediction system, DMCN has to maintain close collaboration with and among its stakeholders, to increase awareness of both public and decision makers to formulate policies, taking into account early warning information and to enhance coping mechanisms for population affected by drought and other extreme climate events.

Greening Drought Prone Areas of Asia through Networking for Managing Watersheds

Mr. SP Wani, Senior Scientist from the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) made a presentation on activities undertaken by ICRISAT to improve watershed management in Asia.

Semi-arid tropics are home to 1.4 billion population; 360 million of which are rural poor. 45% of world's hungry and 70% of malnourished children live in semi-arid tropics. In the semi-arid tropics, the prevailing problems the communities had to face were water crisis and drought, low soil fertility, land degradation, increased population pressure, which all led to acute poverty in these regions. In tune with its vision to improve well-being of the poor of the semi-arid tropics through agricultural research for impact, ICRISAT developed specific strategies on integrated genetic and natural resource management and integrated watershed management. The main objective was to increase and sustain productivity and improve rural livelihoods through holistic system approach.

Soil and water conservation are the vital factors in improving the eco-system of resource poor environments that exist in semi-arid regions. ICRISAT had undertaken projects in several countries of Asia, such as China, India, Vietnam, etc., in the areas of crop diversification, integrated pest management, rainwater harvesting, watershed management and capacity building of communities living in the vulnerable zones. The global community needs to acknowledge that integrated watershed management is the solution for conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.

Drought Management in the Framework of International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR)

Mr. John A Harding, Officer from the Inter-Agency Secretariat of ISDR, specializing in Technical and Scientific issues, gave a presentation on the deliberations of a discussion group on management of drought under the framework of ISDR.

Mr. Harding pointed out that these were just preliminary findings and final report would be out after the next Task Force meeting to be taken place in April 2003. Experts participating in this ad-hoc group were drawn from National Drought Mitigation Center from the University of Nebraska, World Meteorological Organization, UNDP Bureau of Crisis Prevention and Recovery, Global Drought Monitoring Center based in Germany, Drought Monitoring Center – Nairobi, Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency and the UN Development Program (UNDP). The objective of this group was to look at how to increase the visibility of drought and the tools to reduce the impacts by documenting success stories all over the globe and finally to produce recommendations in strengthening the existing drought management mechanisms.

The group recognized that the slow on-set nature of drought calls for special means and methods to deal with it. The group gave special attention to reviewing drought early warning systems (DEWS) DEWS must detect rainfall deficiencies but also status of water supply conditions and impacts in agriculture and wildfires. Besides collection and analysis of information, timely and continuing dissemination to end users was crucial.

The group produced a set of preliminary recommendations which highlighted the need for integration of drought and climate monitoring methods, focusing more on delivery system which needs to be user friendly, promote improvement of drought early warning systems, appropriate mitigation plans, contingency planning and risk based drought and management policies as well as to strengthen and further develop regional networks based on geographical proximity or homogeneity of drought climatology and impacts.



Water and Nature Initiatives of the World Conservation Union (IUCN)

Initiatives taken by another international organization, IUCN, was presented by Mr. Chaminda Rajapakse, a Program Officer from Water and Nature Initiative of IUCN Asia Regional Office in New Delhi, India.

Based on the belief that rural communities have indigenous coping mechanisms which relies directly on existence of biodiversity and eco systems, the chief aim of IUCN's natural resource management program is to increase the opportunities for the communities so that when disaster strikes, there will be more than one option for resources and more diverse livelihood measures. The Water and Nature Initiatives (WNI) program of IUCN is one aspect of natural resource management the organization is practicing to enhance people's livelihoods. WNI is a global program, taking place at river basins and catchments areas to increase integrated management of their land, water and living resources. Plans include implementation of local pilot projects and national level intervention pilot projects.

In Asia, there is a current ongoing program in Mekong Wetland areas: "Protecting Biodiversity and Innovating Sustainable Use", covering Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam. Through this project, IUCN is working towards development of community based management strategy, strengthening inter-sectoral coordination to approach wetland planning at national and regional levels, strengthening policy framework and economic environment of wetland biodiversity and

conservation, developing adequate information base on which wetland policy and planning and management can be based, strengthening human and technical resources and improving options for natural use programs. There are altogether four demonstration sites in three countries: one each in Laos and Thailand and two in Vietnam.

UNDP Initiatives in Drought Mitigation

A presentation prepared by Mr. Hossein Jafari Giv of UNDP was given on his behalf by Mr. Kamal Kishore, Regional Disaster Reduction Advisor, Bureau of Crisis Prevention and Recovery, UNDP.

UNDP held a regional seminar on Drought Mitigation in Tehran in August 2001, covering countries of Afghanistan, India, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. The seminar gave an account of the regional characteristics of drought and its trends, and identified challenges faced in mitigating drought. One prominent challenge is that it is difficult to raise awareness about drought because it is looked upon as a normal part of the climate and impacts of the development process on drought are not recognized. Another challenge is to convince policy makers on the needs of drought preparedness and mitigation, and that reducing drought risks is more cost effective than post impact assessments.

There are several options in tackling these issues. One recommendation is to reduce the level of hazard (prevention) through better water management and optimal use of inadequate precipitation and the level of vulnerability (mitigation), e.g., crop substitution using drought persistent varieties. Public awareness has to be increased, and early warning systems and drought information networks have to be improved to enhance exchange of scientific information. Comprehensive, multi-sectoral and multi-institutional national strategies for managing and reducing drought risks also need to be in place. In this regard, the seminar provided a tangible opportunity for providing impetus to an initiative for disaster risk management.

UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery is currently providing preparatory assistance for a regional initiative of capacity building for disaster management. The potential participating countries include Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The scope of activities will cover knowledge networking, implementation of hazard specific regional programs, provision of technical support to national programs and capacity building projects.

In addition to this seminar, UNDP Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific is planning to start a program for drought. For India, in next 5 years, vulnerability reduction is main focus area, with emphasis on slow-onset disasters. In Pakistan, a similar program on drought mitigation is planned, likewise in Afghanistan, PNG and East Timor. UNDP has been working in many development areas in many countries of the world and have pieces to contribute to end-to-end drought problems.

The chairman thanked all the presenters. He noted that most of the times, droughts were the cause of mere carelessness of men. Therefore, we have to reduce our harmful actions and we have to improve our efforts in working towards reducing the risks of disasters through the use of scientific and technological development.

PLENARY DISCUSSION ON REGIONAL COOPERATION IN DROUGHT MANAGEMENT

Col. Khader from Jordan chaired this component of the session with Mr. Glen Dolcemascolo facilitating the discussions.

APPROACH

The participants were divided into two groups and each group was given three questions for discussion. The discussion questions were:

1. At the regional and sub-regional levels, what kind of activities can strengthen drought early warning systems?
2. What other opportunities are there to strengthen regional cooperation?
3. What are the strategic project entry points to initiate this cooperation?

The discussion of **Group I** was presented by Prof Sharma. He reported that to strengthen the system of drought early warning, data sharing was the most crucial, and in addition, shared facilities for remote sensing and human resources should also be developed between neighboring countries in the region. Regional linkages and networking of existing institutions, working in the areas of forecasting and early warning system can greatly increase the capacity of the system. There is a need for more research and development in enhancing early warning and disseminate warnings to the grass-root level. The existing agricultural universities, technical institutions and meteorological organizations should be linked for such initiatives.

In terms of strengthening regional cooperation, Group I believed that sharing of both good and bad practices can be of significant help as well as capacity building projects up to community level. Organizing exchange study programs and visits to various centers and institutions in the region can also bring about greater cooperation through networking in the region.

Regarding the entry points, a first step could be to develop a common strategy for managing land and water resources in the region. It should be a government led program acceptable to all stakeholders. Promoting political will is also identified as an important area. An example was given for south Asian countries. International NGOs such as OXFAM have already implemented a three-country program in the region. This could be built up to cooperation and conducting dialogue at sub-regional level, through SAARC. The regional initiative by WMO and ICIMOD was also noted. Development of a regional database of hazards, vulnerable areas and drought management practices can be used at another entry point.

Group II reported that drought early warning system can be strengthened through sharing of data and information, including rainfall and stream flow data. By using agricultural sector impact data for a particular area, we can anticipate the extent of effect on other areas in the region and give an early warning. There are a number of institutions in this region whose capacities are hardly utilized. By capitalizing on the existing resources in the region, we can develop climate-forecasting system of regional scale. In this context, regional agencies can work on early warning system and share it with national level agencies, which can serve as a strategic entry point.

Recommendations were given to use river basins as geographical unit for starting cooperation across countries. The ongoing projects in Ganga-Meghna-Brahmaputra basin in South Asia and Mekong river basin in South East Asia are good examples. Regional cooperation can be strengthened further through sharing of expertise in different aspects of drought management. Pre-requisite for this is the development of an inventory of expertise in the region to build a collective pool of expertise.

For the third and final question, Group II pointed out that recognizing the role of media at regional level is important. We also have to identify ways to engage with media at national and regional level as well. Training media prior to event, website, information sharing are possible options. We need not wait for a formal method of regional cooperation, we can begin right away with available resources, such as ADPC, which has a website.

DISCUSSION

Mr. Kishore, the facilitator of the session, gave a synopsis of the discussion. He commented that though there were suggestions on building collective pool of expertise, there was not enough time to deliberate on ways and means of achieving it. Similarly, in enhancing political will, we need to talk about what steps we need to take to actually enhance it. Moreover, it was perhaps inappropriate to recognize the role of media at regional level. Most media systems operate at national level and

therefore we should look at how we engage with media for them to help us in enhancing the cause of drought mitigation.

Prof Sharma commented that the strength and persuasive power of media, as well as our efforts could be combined to influence the decision of policy makers.

Mr. Sajnani, Director from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, shared his views on the importance of having political will in strengthening regional disaster mitigation and management practices and how to translate it into action. One suggestion is to have a multi-lateral protocol of all countries in the Asian region. A premier institution in each country could be identified and function as a nodal institution for that particular country for data sharing, exchange of information, etc. Experts from different countries can be sent on rotational basis. These institutions would not need any political clearance for each deputation since that institution would be already named in that protocol.

Col. Khader added that in every nation, the link between politicians and citizens during crisis and disasters is the media. Therefore, approaching them will greatly strengthen disaster management purposes.

Mr. Bill Berger of OFDA commented that we all should look at what MRC, WMO, ICIMOD and other regional organizations are doing to avoid overlapping of activities. We should build on those already existing processes rather than talking in parallel initiating a new effort.

XII. SESSION IX: FOLLOW-UP AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This session was co-chaired by Dr. Suvit and Mr. R.C.A. Jain. All the RCC representatives and the observers actively took part in this discussion session for the follow-up and future directions of RCC.

Dr. Suvit reminded the participants the important issues that need to be addressed: the sustainability of RCC mechanism, and the theme and the venue for RCC4.

Mr. Hettiarachi suggested that all countries and ADPC should make a request to AusAID and other donor organizations for funding the future RCC meetings. He proposed the theme for the next RCC as Urban Disaster Management.

Mr. Huq supported the idea of a collective request to the donors to provide sustainability to RCC mechanism. The Urban Disaster Management theme for the next RCC is appropriate, considering the growing urban population in many Asian cities and increasing severity of hazards in the urban areas. Regarding the venue, he stated that Bangladesh would be happy to host the next meeting after obtaining clearances from authorities in due course of time.



Mr. Anil Sinha remarked that the presence of all the distinguished guests added to the significance of the Indian National Day for Disaster Reduction seminar hosted by the Government of India. RCC has proved to be a good regional innovation as well as a rewarding interactive forum. Ownership should be with all the members and then the sustainability will be achieved. We all know that disasters such as droughts force people to migrate to urban areas and cause psychological and social trauma to the communities. Therefore, the urban theme for the next year meeting will be beneficial

to all of us. However, we have to move away from the event-to-event syndrome and look at a comprehensive approach to disaster management. As discussed at previous meetings, ADPC should be a facilitator in developing a joint proposal by the member countries to the donor organizations for future financial support. For continuing with this approach under the framework of the RCC, the theme of Urban Risk Reduction for RCC4 seems to fit the activities and the directions we are taking.

Mr. Peou Samy conveyed his thanks to ADPC. RCC meetings have been very helpful to Cambodia in getting, new ideas, experiences and concepts and they should be conducted annually. Through these meetings, Cambodia has been able to share its own experience as well as learn from others.

Col. Khader from Jordan proposed “Urban Risk Reduction and Sustainable Development” as the theme for the next year’s meeting. He reiterated Jordan’s commitment to continuing to participate in future RCC meetings.

Dr. Suvit accepted the invitation by Bangladesh and confirmed the theme for RCC4 as “Urban Risk Management and Sustainable Development”. He also confirmed ADPC’s willingness to draft a proposal for funding and sought input from all RCC member countries as soon as possible.

Ms. Estuko from ADRC assured the participants of the commitment of ADRC to the Asian region and its continued cooperative work with ADPC. On behalf of WHO, Mr. Luis Jorge Perez praised the Government of India and ADPC for their tremendous efforts in organizing this meeting. WHO hopes to carry on this fruitful association with ADPC in delivering public health courses in the region and making this relationship into a continuing one.

With ADPC and ADRC as principal regional partners, Mr. Kamal Kishore of UNDP expressed UNDP-BCPR’s confidence towards the development of regional disaster management network and partnerships and in particular a regional program on drought. Mr. Sospeter Muiruri of DMC-Nairobi thanked ADPC for giving this opportunity to learn from and share experience with another region.

XIII. CLOSING CEREMONY OF RCC

Dr Suvit and Mr. R.C.A. Jain co-chaired the closing ceremony of the third RCC meeting.

The summary overview of the meeting was presented by Mr. Rego of ADPC. The third meeting marked the turning point in RCC process with the co-hosting of the meeting by a member country. With Bangladesh offering to host the next meeting, a tradition is being established for RCC. The third RCC meeting further consolidated the mechanism and enable active interaction among NDMOs. The presence of observers from key agencies and foreign missions has helped identify new depths in partnerships.

The inauguration by Deputy Prime Minister set the tone and posed issues for the meeting to address. The Deputy Prime Minister challenged us to be proactive and synergetic and Prof Krasae encouraged organizations to work together. We had a call for a systematic vulnerability assessment leading to effective vulnerability reduction programs on the ground.

We have learned of extensive work undertaken and innovative programs developed by the host country. From the country presentations, we have learned about different disasters that frequent the countries of Asia: floods and landslides in Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Kazakhstan, Nepal, Thailand, Vietnam, tropical cyclones in Philippines, wildfires in Mongolia, and the lessons learned from these disasters, new initiatives taken and the institutional arrangements of national disaster management systems. It was significant to note that mitigation programs were either absent or under developed. We have also learned about the national and regional initiatives and have identified the

capacity building needs of RCC member countries, and discussed multi-lateral cooperation and identified ways and means of how to enhance it especially in the south Asian region.

One highlight of this meeting was the drought session where our colleagues from India, Jordan, and Sri Lanka shared with us their experiences and our partner organizations give us the regional perspective of their work. The group discussions provide us with interesting ideas that are worth pursuing.

Mr. RCA Jain, the co-chair gave a brief address on behalf of the co-host of the meeting, the Government of India. He remarked that it is encouraging to see the process initiated by India carried forward with Bangladesh offering to host the next meeting. RCC is a useful, interactive and cooperative forum for the region in our fight against disasters. ADPC has been doing commendable work and all member countries should look at how to strengthen its mandate in all areas of disaster management and support it. At this point in time, all of us in the RCC should make an effort to visualize what the scenario of disaster management will be fifty years from now. Maybe ADPC can help prepare a vision document on where we will stand fifty years from now and what we need to do in terms of preparedness and mitigation so that a regional strategy can flow from this vision. Mr. Jain also encouraged donor countries and organizations to assist not only in sustaining the process of RCC but also in financing disaster management processes in the member countries to implement new directions identified.

Dr. Suvit Yodmani addressed the ceremony and expressed his gratitude, on behalf of ADPC, to the staff at the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Home Affairs and thanked everyone involved in organizing the meeting, and all the attendees. He expressed satisfaction at the participation and support of senior political leaders, as well as officials of foreign affairs from several countries of the region. Dr. Suvit noted that all the member countries have endorsed the importance and sustainability of RCC mechanism and affirmed that ADPC will respond to their suggestions and will take the necessary steps to ensure its consolidation.

The Closing Address from Mr. Stephen Walker, First Secretary, AusAID Bangkok, was delivered by Mr. Brian Parry from MFESB. By taking a look at formal agenda, it was obvious that a great deal of information sharing and exchange would go on in at RCC3. But it is always in the “informal” agenda of an ADPC meeting that the true exchanges are made. Over the years, disaster mitigation and management has become more and more complex and this complexity cannot be solved at the individual level. Therefore, by supporting regional and international organizations, networks and activities including this consultative meeting, we can start to address these emerging challenges. The networks created and built upon here – the learning and the sharing of ideas that have taken place must continue and must be shaped into action. Regional disaster preparedness cannot be fully realized without going beyond national boundaries, in fact is one of the better examples of where we become greater than the sum of our parts. He reiterated the support of the Australian Government, AusAID and at heart the commitments of the Australian people to help mitigate the human tragedy of disasters throughout our region.

The Closing Address was given at **ANNEX VI** of this report.

XIV. ANNEXES

ANNEX I: DELEGATES AND OBSERVERS

DELEGATES

| | | |
|-------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Bangladesh | Mr. BMM Mozharul Huq, ndc | Secretary in charge Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief People's Republic of Bangladesh |
| Bangladesh | Mr. K. C. Kundu | Director General Disaster Management Bureau Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief People's Republic of Bangladesh |
| Bhutan | Mr. Karma S. Tshosar | Second Secretary Royal Bhutanese Embassy, New Delhi, India |
| Cambodia | Mr. Peou Samy | Secretary General The National Committee for Disaster Management (NCDM), Kingdom of Cambodia |
| China | Mr. Li Baojun | Deputy Director Department of Disaster and Social Relief Ministry of Civil Affairs, People's Republic of China |
| India | Mr. R.C.A.Jain, IAS | Special Secretary Disaster Management Division Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India |
| India | Mr. R.K. Singh, IAS | Joint Secretary Disaster Management Division Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India |
| India | Mr. S.K. Swami | Director Disaster Management Division Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India |
| India | Mr. Sajnani | Director Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India |
| India | Dr. Mohan Kanda, IAS | Special Secretary Department of Agriculture and Cooperation Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India |
| India | Mr. Naved Masood | Joint Secretary Department of Agriculture and Cooperation Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India |
| India | Mr. Anil Sinha | Head, National Center for Disaster Management (NCDM), Indian Institute of Public of Administration, Government of India |

| | | |
|--------------------|--|---|
| Indonesia | H.E. Mr. Harun Che Su High Commission | The Embassy of Malaysia New Delhi, India |
| Jordan | Lt. Col. Zuhair Abdel- Kareem M. Khader | Manager –General Secretariat Civil Defence Directorate Jordanian Civil Defence, Ministry of Interior Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan |
| Kazakhstan | Mr. Nurakhmet Bizhanov | First Deputy Chairman Emergency Agency, Republic of Kazakhstan |
| Kazakhstan | Mr. Berik M. Abdushev | Second Secretary Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan New Delhi, India |
| Mongolia | Maj. Gen. Odhkuu Urjin | Chief State Board for Civil Defence of Mongolia, Mongolia |
| Nepal | Mr.Chandeshwar Acharya | Director Department of Narcotics Control and Disaster Management, Kingdom of Nepal |
| Pakistan | Mr. Jalil Abbas Jilani | Deputy High Commissioner High Commission of Pakistan Embassy of Pakistan to India |
| Philippines | Ms. Rosario T Cabrera | Regional Director Office of Civil Defence Department of National Defence, DND, Region VI |
| Sri Lanka | Hon. Mr. Sita Samaraweera | Minister Ministry of Social Welfare Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka |
| Sri Lanka | Mr. N.D.Hettiarachchi | Director National Disaster Management Center Ministry of Social Welfare Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka |
| Sri Lanka | Mr. A. Saj U. Mendis | High Commission of Sri Lanka to India, Embassy of Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka |
| Thailand | Mr. Arak Putrakool | Deputy Director-General Department of Disaster Prevention & Mitigation Ministry of Interior |
| Vietnam | Mr. Dang Quang Tinh | Director Department of Dike Management, Flood and Storm Control Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development Socialist Republic of Vietnam |

OBSERVERS

AusAID

Ms. Suzanne Bent
Programme Officer
AusAID, Canberra, Australia

ADRC

Ms. Etsuko Tsunozaki
Senior Researcher
Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC),
Japan

ARC

Mr. Douglas Allen
Director
International Disaster Response Unit
American Red Cross, Washington DC, USA

DMC – Nairobi

Mr. Sospeter Muiruri
Deputy Director
Drought Monitoring Center – Nairobi

ECHO

Dr. Tapan Kr. Mahapatra
Programme Assistant
European Community Humanitarian Office
(ECHO), India

EWC

Dr. Nancy D. Lewis
Director, Research Program
East-West Center, USA

ICRISAT

Dr. S.P. Wani
Senior Scientist
International Crops Research
Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics

ISDR

Mr. Salvano Briceno
Director
Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International
Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR)

Mr. John A. Harding
Technical & Scientific Issues
Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International
Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR)

IUCN

Mr. Chaminda Rajapakse
Program Officer, Water & Nature Initiative
IUCN Asia Regional Office, New Delhi,
India

Ms. Lise Jensen
IUCN Asia Regional Office, New Delhi,
India

MFESB

Mr. Brian Parry
President
Metropolitan Fire & Emergency Services
Board (MFESB), Melbourne, Australia

OFDA

Mr. William S. Berger
Senior Regional Advisor
Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance
USAID – OFDA, Nepal

Government of Orissa

Dr. R. Balakrishman
Special Relief Commissioner
Department of Revenue
Government of Orissa, India

UNDP

Mr. Kamal Kishore
Regional Advisor
UNDP, New Delhi, India

USAID

Ms. Nina Minka
Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance
USAID, Nepal

WHO

Dr. Lin Aung
WHO Regional Office
New Delhi, India

Dr. Luis Jorge Perez
WHO Regional Office
New Delhi, India

World Bank

Dr. Santosh Kumar
Disaster Management Specialist
The World Bank
New Delhi, India

ANNEX II: LIST OF RCC MEMBERS (AS OF DECEMBER 2002)

Mr. BMM Mozharul Huq, ndc
Secretary in charge, Ministry of Disaster
Management and Relief
Government of the People's Republic of
Bangladesh
Bangladesh Secretariat
Dhaka 1205 **Bangladesh**

Mr. K. C. Kundu
Director General, Disaster Management
Bureau, Ministry of Disaster Management
and Relief
People's Republic of Bangladesh
5th floor, Jiban Bima Bhavan
10 Dilkhusa Commercial Dhaka-1000,
Bangladesh

Mr. Dasho Pema Wangchhuk
Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs
Thimpu Bhutan, **Kingdom of Bhutan**

Haji Awang Zaidi bin Haji Md Daud
Director of Fire Services, Ministry of Home
Affairs
Fire Service Headquarters, Barakas Old
Airport
State of Brunei Darussalam

Haji Mohd Zakaria Haji Sarudin
Acting Director, Department of
Environment, Parks and Recreation
Ministry of Development
State of Brunei Darussalam

H.E Mr. Nhim Vanda
1st Vice President, The National Committee
for Disaster Management (NCDM)
Cambodia
274 Boulevard Monivong
Phnom Penh, **Kingdom of Cambodia**

Mr. Peou Samy
Secretary General, National Committee for
Disaster Management
3, Street 55, Sangkat Chatomuk, Khan Dain
Penh
Phnom Penh, **Kingdom of Cambodia**

Mr. Wang Zhen Yao
Director General, Department of Disaster
and Social Relief
Ministry of Civil Affairs
People's Republic of China

Ms. Cheng Chung Hsia
Director General, Urban and Housing
Development Department
Council for Economic Planning and
Development
No.3 Pao Ching Rd., Taipei, **Taiwan**

Mr. Francisco F. M. Do Rosario
Deputy Head, National Disaster Management
Office
United Nations Transitional Administration
of East Timor (UNTAET)
P.O.Box 2436
Darwin NT 080, **Australia**

Mr. Otar Tavelishvili
Head, Department of Extreme Situation and
Civil Defence
Ministry of Internal Affairs
29 Tsurtaveli St, Tbilisi
Republic of Georgia 380005

Mr. Mohan Kanda, IAS
Special Secretary and Central Relief
Commissioner, Ministry of Agriculture
Krishi Bhavan Dr., Rajendra Prasad Rd.
New Delhi 11001, **Republic of India**

Mr. R.C.A.Jain, IAS
Special Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs
Government of India
Krishi Bhavan Dr., Rajendra Prasad Rd.
New Delhi 11001, **Republic of India**

Mr. Prijono Tjiptoherijanto
Secretary, Bakornas PB
National Coordination Board for Disaster
Management
JI.Medan Merdeka Barat, No.3
Jakarta 10110, **Republic of Indonesia**

Mr. Abbas Syed Jazeri
Director General, Coordination of Safety and
Reconstruction Affairs, Ministry of Interior,
Islamic Republic of Iran

Major General Mahmoud Abbadi
Director General of Civil Defence, Jordanian
Civil Defence
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Mr. Byung-Rok Lee
Director, Disaster Prevention Planning
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Mr. Phetsavang Sounalath
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Maj. Gen. Odhkuu Urjin
Chief, State Board for Civil Defence of
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Mr. Kumar Prasad Poudyal
Director General, Department of Narcotics
Control and Disaster Management
Government of Nepal
Singha Durbar, Kathmandu
Kingdom of Nepal

Brigadier Mohammad Ilyas Khan
Director General, Emergency Relief Cell
Government of Pakistan
Republic of Pakistan

Colonel Rauka Eric Ani
Director General, National Disaster
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Maj. Gen. Melchor P. Rosales
Administrator OCD and Executive Officer
NDCC
Office of Civil Defence, Department of
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Quezon City, **Republic of The Philippines**

Mrs. V.Jegarasingham
Secretary, Ministry of Social Welfare
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Mr. N.D.Hettiarachchi
Director, National Disaster Management
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Ministry of Social Welfare
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Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

Mr. Kosin Kesthong
Director-General, Department of Disaster
Prevention & Mitigation Ministry of Interior
Sunandha Palace, Ratchasima Road
Dusit Bangkok 10300, **Thailand**

Mr. Dang Quang Tinh
Director, Department of Dike Management,
Flood & Storm Control
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
So 2 Ngoc-ha, Hanoi
Socialist Republic of Vietnam

**ANNEX III: AGENDA OF THE 3RD MEETING OF THE ADPC REGIONAL CONSULTATIVE
COMMITTEE ON DISASTER MANAGEMENT
(in collaboration with the Government of India)**

29-31 October 2002

*29 October 2002 Venue: Nehru Memorial, Teen Murti House, New Delhi, India
(along with the National Symposium on Indian National Day for
Disaster Reduction)*

30-31 October 2002 Venue: Crown Plaza Surya Hotel, New Delhi, India,

MONDAY 28 OCTOBER 2002

18.00-19.00 Registration
19.00-20.30 Welcome Reception

TUESDAY 29 OCTOBER 2002

10.00-11.15 **INAUGURAL SESSION OF SEMINAR AND RCC MEETING**

- Welcome Address - Shri R.C.A Jain, Special Secretary, IAS, Ministry of Home Affairs
- Address - Dr. Suvit Yodmani, Executive Director, ADPC
- Address - Shri N. Gopalaswami, Home Secretary, Government of India
- Keynote Address - H.E. Prof. Krasae Chanawongse, Chairman, ADPC Board of Trustees
- Inaugural Address - Shri L.K. Advani, Deputy Prime Minister and Union Minister

11.15-11.45 Refreshment Break

11.45-13.00 **SESSION I: LESSONS LEARNED FROM PAST DISASTERS - INDIAN
EXPERIENCE IN DISASTER MANAGEMENT**

This session will present and analyse recent institutional arrangements and initiatives for disaster management in India, and what general lessons have been learned for broader application.

Chairman: Shri R.C.A Jain, Special Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs

Co-Chairman: Mr. Dennis Lazarus, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP India

Presentations

- *“GSDMA Model”* - Dr. P. K. Mishra, Principal Secretary to CM, GoG and CEO, GSDMA
- *“Disaster Knowledge Network”* - Shri Anil Sinha, Head, NCDM, IIPA
- *“Disaster Response in India; Institutional Arrangements at National/ State Levels - New Initiatives”* - Shri R.K. Singh, Joint Secretary (DM), Ministry of Home Affairs

13.00-14.00 Lunch

14.00-15.00 **SESSION II: LESSONS LEARNED FROM RECENT DISASTERS &
PROGRAMS FROM ASIAN COUNTRIES**

This session will analyse experiences in disaster preparedness and response to recent disasters as well as new programs in Asian countries, and what general lessons been learned for broader application.

CHAIRMAN: DR. SUVIT YODMANI, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ADPC

CO-CHAIRMAN: SHRI ANIL SINHA, HEAD, NCDM, IIPA

Presentations by RCC Members

- *“Disaster Management in Bangladesh”* - Mr. K.C Kundu, Director General, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief
- *“Lessons Learned from Recent Disasters in Nepal”* - Mr. Chandreshwar Acharya, Deputy Director, Department of Narcotics Control and Disaster Management
- *“Disaster Relief Situation in China”* - Mr. Li Baojun, Deputy Director, Department of Disaster and Social Relief, Ministry of Civil Affairs
- *“The Philippine Disaster Management System and Lessons Learned from Tropical Depression “Milenyo”*” - Ms. R.T. Cabrera, Regional Director, Office of Civil Defence, Department of National Defence

15.00-15.30 Tea/Coffee

15.30-16.30 **SESSION III: REGIONAL COOPERATION FOR DISASTER REDUCTION**

Chairman: Prof. A.S. Arya, Professor Emeritus, IIT Roorkee

Co-Chairman: Mr. BMM Mozharul Huq, Secretary, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief

Presentations

- *“UN’s Initiatives for Disaster Management in the Region”* - Mr. Dennis Lazarus, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP India
- *“Regional Cooperation in Disaster Management and Role of ADPC”* - Mr. A.J. Rego, Director, ADPC
- *“IMD’s Initiatives in Regional Cooperation”* - Dr. SR Kalsi, Deputy Director General (CW), IMD
- *“ADRC’s Initiatives in Regional Cooperation”* - Ms Etsuko Tsunozaki, Senior Researcher, ADRC

16.30-17.00 **VALEDICTORY SESSION OF SYMPOSIUM**

Chairman: Shri Sompal, Member, Planning Commission

Guest of Honor: Dr. Brenda Gael McSweeney, Resident Representative, UNDP

- Valedictory Address - Mr. Salvano Briceno, Director, ISDR
- Vote of Thanks - Shri Anil Sinha, Head, NCDM, IIPA

19.00-21.00 Welcome Dinner (Hosted by the Government of India)

WEDNESDAY 30 OCTOBER 2002

09.00-09.30 **SESSION IV: OVERVIEW OF THE MEETING**

This session will explain the objectives of the RCC meeting and the outputs expected from this meeting.

Chair: Dr. Suvit Yodmani

Facilitator: AJ Rego

- *“Role of RCC and Purpose of the Meeting”* - Dr. Suvit Yodmani, Executive Director, ADPC
- Self-introduction by all participants and observers

- 09.30-11.00 **SESSION V: FOLLOW-UP OF SUGGESTED ACTION AREAS OF 2nd RCC**
- This session will share the actions taken by ADPC following the recommendations of the last RCC Meeting.*
- Co-chairs: Hon. Mr. Samaraweera/ Mr. Tinh** **Facilitator: AR Subbiah**
- “Action Areas suggested by 2nd RCC meeting” - Mr. A.J Rego, Director, ADPC
 - Reports on Action taken by ADPC since 2nd RCC meeting
 - ASEAN Regional Program on Disaster Management and AEGDM
 - Legal and Institutional Arrangement Workshop
 - Advocacy for Total Disaster Risk Management
 - ADPC primer on Urban Disaster Mitigation
 - Workshop on “Best Practices in Disaster Mitigation”
- Discussion
- 11.00-11.30 Tea/Coffee
- 11.30-12.30 **SESSION VI: LESSONS LEARNED FROM RECENT DISASTERS & PROGRAMS**
- This session will continue with the aims of Session II.*
- Co-chairs: Mr. KC Kundu/ Mr. Li Baojun** **Facilitator: Zen D. Willison**
- Presentations by RCC Members
- “Lessons Learned from Recent Disasters and Programs in Cambodia”- Mr. Peou Samy, Secretary General, National Committee for Disaster Management (NCDM)
 - “Lessons Learned from Wildfires in Mongolia” - Maj. Gen. Urjin, Chief, State Board for Civil Defence of Mongolia
- Discussion
- 12.30-13.30 Lunch
- 13.30-14.30 **SESSION VI (continued): LESSONS LEARNED FROM RECENT DISASTERS & PROGRAMS**
- Co-chairs: Gen Urjin/ Mr. Acharya** **Facilitator: NMSI Arambepola**
- Presentations by RCC Members
- “Lessons Learned from Recent Disasters and Programs in Kazakhstan” - Mr. N. Bizhanov, First Deputy Chairman, Emergency Agency
 - “Lessons learned from Floods in Mekong River Delta of Vietnam” - Mr. D. Q. Tinh, Director, Department of Dike Management, Flood and Storm Control, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
 - “Disaster Management in Thailand “- Mr. A. Putrakool, Deputy Director General, Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation
- Discussion
- 14.30-15.00 Tea/ coffee
- 15.00-17.00 **SESSION VII: CAPACITY BUILDING OF NATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS – PRIORITISING FUTURE ACTION AREAS**
- This session will discuss the results of the questionnaire on needs and capacities for disaster management training, and will conclude with the priorities of training courses*

to be designed.

Co-chairs: Mr. Peou Samy/ Ms. Cabrera

Facilitator: Zen D. Willison

Discussion in Working Groups
Plenary Presentations
Plenary Discussions

THURSDAY 31 OCTOBER 2002

09.00-10.30 SESSION VIII: TRENDS AND ADVANCES IN DROUGHT PREPAREDNESS AND MANAGEMENT

This session will detail experiences in drought preparedness and management and the effectiveness of pilot projects.

Co-chairs: Mr. K.C Kundu/ Mr. Arak Putakool

Facilitator: AR Subbiah

Introductory Remarks by Co-Chairs

09.00-09.10 Keynote Address by Mr. Mohan Kanda, Special Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture

09.10-09.30 Country Presentations

- 09.30-10.30
- *“Drought Management and Initiatives in Sri Lanka”* - Mr. ND Hettiarachchi, Director, National Disaster Management Center
 - *“Drought Management and Initiatives in Jordan”* - Lt. Col Khader, Manager - General Secretariat, Jordan Civil Defence
 - *“Indian Experience in Drought Management”*- Mr. Balakrishnan, Relief Commissioner, Orissa

Q&A

10.30-11.00 Tea/ coffee

11.00-12.30 SESSION VIII (continued): TRENDS AND ADVANCES IN DROUGHT PREPAREDNESS AND MANAGEMENT

Co-chairs: Mr. K.C Kundu / Mr. Arak Putakool

Facilitator: G Dolcemascolo

Regional initiatives in drought management & mitigation- presentations by

- *“Drought Management: Regional Perspectives”* - Mr. AR Subbiah, Program Manager, ADPC
- *“Activities of Drought Monitoring Center – Nairobi”* - Mr. Sospeter Muiruri, Deputy Director, Drought Monitoring Center in Nairobi
- *“Greening Drought Prone Areas of Asia Through Networking for Managing Watershed”* - Dr. SP Wani, Senior Scientist, International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), India
- *“Drought Management in the Framework of International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR)”* - Mr. John A. Harding, Inter-Agency Secretariat of International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR)
- *“Water and Nature Initiatives of the World Conservation Union (IUCN)”* - Mr. Chaminda Rajapakse, Program Officer, Water and Nature Initiative, IUCN Asia Regional Office, India
- *“UNDP Initiatives in Drought Mitigation”* - Mr. Kamal Kishore, Regional Advisor, UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery

ANNEX IV: ADDRESSES AT THE JOINT OPENING CEREMONY OF GOI SEMINAR AND THE THIRD RCC MEETING

(a) Welcome Address of Shri R.C.A Jain, Special Secretary on the occasion of the GOI Seminar on Indian National Day for Disaster Reduction and RCC3

It is a matter of great privilege for me to welcome Honorable Shri Advaniji, Deputy Prime Minister of India on this important event of observance of Indian National Day for Disaster Reduction today and the first day of the third meeting of Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) Regional Consultative Committee on Disaster Management. This is the first meeting being organized by ADPC in India. I extend my warm welcome to His Excellency Prof. Krasae Chanawongse, Chairman, ADPC Board of Trustees and Dr. Suvit Yodmani, Executive Director, ADPC, Bangkok. I also welcome Shri Gopalaswamy, Union Home Secretary, who has recently joined the Ministry of Home Affairs.

I welcome the distinguished guests from member countries and Embassies, various United Nations organizations and donor agencies to this Conference on Regional Cooperation on Disaster Reduction. I also gratefully welcome all the participants from various Ministries and Departments, State Governments, Research and Academic organizations and members of Press and Media.

The International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction declared by the United Nations and observed the world over through the 90s has been instrumental in ushering in a paradigm change from reactive response to proactive prevention and mitigation. The Yokohama strategies set the agenda for disaster preparedness and mitigation for all the developing as well as developed countries. The Government of India have sought to keep alive the spirit by observing the National Day for Disaster Reduction with a focus on public awareness, education and coordinated effort of all role players in disaster management.

29th October 1999 saw the coastal State of Orissa devastated by a super cyclone and the entire country benumbed by the trail of destruction. The National Day for Disaster reduction is observed on 29th October every year for introspection and strengthening our resolve to put in our joint and concerted efforts for mitigation of the impact of disasters. This day is observed throughout the country by organizing several activities with a view to generating public awareness.

We in Asia are more vulnerable to disasters. Disaster related vulnerability is defined as the extent to which a community, structure, service or geographical area is likely to be damaged or disrupted by the impact of a particular hazard on account of its nature, construction and proximity to hazardous terrain or a disaster-prone area. The concept of vulnerability, therefore, leads to calculation of risks. Risk management means the level of social and economic ability required to cope with the hazard in order to reduce major disruption and loss of human life and property. It is in this background that the Ministry of Urban Development in the Government of India has brought out a Vulnerability Atlas of India, which identifies the areas of having a bearing on housing and related infrastructure where initiatives are needed for disaster prevention and mitigation. The Atlas inter alia includes identification of vulnerable areas with reference to natural hazards, risk assessment due to earthquakes, cyclones and floods and appropriate techno-legal mechanisms to promote disaster resistant technologies for retrofitting of existing stocks and construction of new buildings in the vulnerable areas.

The ADPC, Bangkok, in its existence of nearly two decades, has played a crucial role in forging a regional oriented approach for comprehensive management of disasters. ADPC has also worked in most countries of the region for developing awareness, preparedness and mitigation measures. I am happy that members of the Regional Consultative Committee of ADPC are here with us today to

participate in our National Day for Disaster Reduction and deliberate on various issues of regional cooperation with a view to evolving a common strategy.

Regional cooperation in disaster mitigation and management calls for a mechanism for coordination not only among various Governments, but also among the communities and the people concerned. Eventually, it is the vulnerable population, which has to cope with the havoc caused by disasters. Regional cooperation, therefore, should not only remain in the realm of scientific and technological innovations and collaborations, but should also extend to capacity building of the community and strengthen the existing mechanism, both traditional and modern. I am confident that the deliberations of the Regional Consultative Committee will help to develop a comprehensive course of action and response plan for the entire region for better disaster management.

Once again, I extend my warm welcome to all of you and wish you all a very fruitful discussion. I hope your stay in this historical capital city of India will be comfortable.

Thank you.

**(b) Address by Dr. Suvit Yodmani, Executive Director, ADPC at the GOI Seminar on
Indian National Day for Disaster Reduction and RCC3**

Your Excellency Mr. L.K. Advani, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Home Affairs, Mr. N. Gopalaswami, Home Secretary, Government of India, Mr. R.C.A Jain, Special Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, Excellency Prof. Dr. Krasae Chanawongse, Chairman of the ADPC Board of Trustees, Excellencies, delegate members and observers of ADPC Regional Consultative Committee on Disaster Management, prominent officers from the Government of India, Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

A very good morning to you all.

I am honoured and privileged to welcome you to this special joint opening ceremony of the National Symposium commemorating the Indian National Day for Disaster Reduction and the 3rd Meeting of the ADPC Regional Consultative Committee on Disaster management. I would like to especially welcome Excellency L.K. Advani, Deputy Prime Minister. Your gracious presence here is testimony to the importance your Government and yourself attach to disaster preparedness and management. We also highly appreciate the presence of Professor Dr. Krasae, Chairman of the ADPC Board of Trustees, former minister of Public Health and Foreign Affairs.

We are all reminded of the date, 29th October, Indian National Day for Disaster Reduction. Today is the 3rd anniversary of the Orissa super cyclone. While we vividly recall the pain and anguish of victims and survivors, we note with satisfaction the substantive and significant work carried out by the state and the country to improve disaster preparedness and mitigation all over the nation. We look forward to hearing of and learning from your experiences during the course of the meeting, for we are fully aware that India is one of the leading countries in Asia whose experience, expertise and model of risk and disaster management are invaluable lessons for us.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since its inception in 1986; ADPC has served the region in support of capacity building for disaster preparedness and management.

About three years ago, ADPC set up the RCC mechanism with the objectives of:

- Firstly, enhancing regional cooperation in the vital areas of disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness,
- Secondly, identifying disaster related needs and priorities of Asia-Pacific countries,
- Thirdly, developing action strategies for disaster reduction in the region and
- Fourthly, promoting regional and sub-regional cooperative programs.

At its second meeting last year, member countries endorsed the RCC as a very useful and beneficial platform for dialogue, exchange of experience and lessons learned, and recognizing that it serves as an important means of conceptualizing and developing practical cooperative programs between member countries at the regional and sub-regional levels.

Today, the RCC has firmly taken root with 28 country officials who are heads of National Disaster Management Offices from 26 countries as its members.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since last year's meeting, ADPC has continued to pursue the key recommendations of the meeting. We have widely circulated the report and publicized its outcomes at key regional and international conferences. We have supported regional dialogue among countries on "Legal and Institutional Arrangements and Disaster Management Planning", as well as on "Reconstruction Needs Analysis and Planning" in partnership with the World Bank. To share experiences and best practices in disaster mitigation, ADPC organized a well-attended workshop in Indonesia only last month.

To support capacity building of national disaster management systems, we have introduced new training courses at the regional level on Earthquake Vulnerability Reduction, Climate Information and Public Health and Emergency Management. We continue to work on national projects in over 12 countries in South, South East and East Asia.

At the sub-regional level, we have worked closely with the 10 ASEAN countries and the ASEAN Secretariat to support the development of the "ASEAN Regional Program on Disaster Management", which was endorsed in Hanoi in September, this year. We continue to work closely with SAARC and the Mekong River Commission, especially on their Flood Management and Mitigation Strategy.

This third meeting of RCC provides member countries with the opportunity to review progress made from earlier meetings and set priorities for the region. Recommendations will guide the work of ADPC and its partners. As decided at the last meeting, a special focus of this year's meeting is an exclusive session on "Drought", which is having significant impact in several member countries. Our host country, India, has extensive experience in contingency planning and mitigation of droughts that we can all learn from.

The first and second RCC meetings envisaged that subsequent meetings be held in member countries by rotation to enable us to learn from practical experience. I am glad and highly appreciate that the Government of India has taken the lead in inviting us here, and co-hosting the meeting. We are grateful to the Government for the initiatives and support in making this event a success.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

ADPC has worked closely with India as a key country since our inception in 1986.

India has two members on the ADPC International Board of Trustees; her Excellency Mrs. Ponappa, the Indian Ambassador to Thailand and the Secretary to the Government of India of the Nodal Ministry for Disaster Management.

Over the years, we have collaborated with various ministries; Scientific and Technical institutions, State and Local Governments, training institutions and non-government organizations in India. ADPC was involved with the national workshop on disaster management in 1993, which led to the formation of the National Center for Disaster Management. In the field of training, we have over 280 Indian Alumni from our regional courses. We have been involved in delivering courses in India on disaster management and mitigation and community based disaster management. They are delivered in partnership with national, state and NGO training institutions.

ADPC has participated in post disaster assessment missions after the earthquake in Latur, Maharashtra in 1993, the Orissa Cyclone in 1999 and Gujarat earthquake in 2000, and in producing input to the formulation of reconstruction programs.

Under our Asian Urban Disaster Mitigation Program (AUDMP), we have been involved in risk assessment and mitigation planning in Calcutta, Baroda and Ahmedabad. Our Program for Enhancement of Emergency Response (PEER) is helping to establish systems for medical first responders, collapsed structure search and rescue and hospital preparedness.

At the state level, ADPC has implemented an Asian Development Bank funded technical assistance project in Uttar Pradesh and Uttaranchal states. It gives me great pleasure to inform you that the TA has supported the establishment of the first state level Ministry of Disaster Management and state level Disaster Management and Mitigation Center in Uttaranchal.

India faces a wide variety of disaster risks and has evolved a comprehensive institutional system to deal with them, employing several new initiatives in the last few years. By holding this meeting in India and learning from your experience, the RCC member countries, observers and ADPC will greatly benefit. This will guide us well in our deliberations today and at the subsequent two days of the RCC meeting while addressing issues of regional cooperation in disaster reduction, and the specific area of drought management.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before concluding, I would like to extend ADPC's gratitude to the AusAID and the Australian Government for their continuing generous support to the institutional development of ADPC, and specifically for all three RCC meetings.

Finally, I would also like to thank the organizing teams from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India and from the ADPC, and all those who have been involved and assisted in the preparation of this meeting for their hard and productive work.

Thank you very much for your attention.

(c) Address of Home Secretary on the occasion of GOI Seminar on Indian National Day for Disaster Reduction and RCC3

Honorable Deputy Prime Minister, Chairman, Board of Trustees, Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre, my colleagues in Central and State Governments, Ladies and Gentleman,

It is indeed my pleasure to welcome all the distinguished participants in the seminar. I am glad that the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center decided to organize their meeting of their Regional Consultative Committee on Disaster Management in India this year.

Disasters are as old as mankind. The Indian sub-continent, with its vast territory, large population and unique geo-climatic conditions, has traditionally been exposed to natural disasters. While vulnerability varies from region to region, causing immense loss of life and property and disruption in the economic growth of the region.

The Asian region is particularly vulnerable to natural disasters. During the last decade of the 20th century, Asia accounted for about 83% of the total population that was affected by disaster globally. In India, droughts and famines were the biggest killers about five decades back. With increased irrigation development, improved reservoir management and food security measures, there has been substantial reduction in the number of deaths caused due to droughts and famines. However, heavy loss of life and property due to floods, cyclones and earthquakes occurs every year with painful regularity. During the last three years, over 24,000 human lives were lost in only two major disasters, super cyclone in Orissa and earthquake in Gujarat. The cyclone in Orissa struck on October 29, 1999. The Indian National Day for Disaster Reduction is observed on October 29 as a grim reminder of the massive loss of life and property in the Orissa cyclone and our firm commitment towards disaster preparedness, mitigation, response and relief.

Natural disasters do create havoc not only in India but in the entire Asian region. To this grim situation, a new dimension has been added by man-made disaster, either deliberate due to negligence. Bhopal gas tragedy is a vivid and sorrowful reminder of these types of disaster. We also know that disasters do not recognize boundaries. It is, therefore, heartening that the countries in Asia have now decided to pool in their resource to mitigate the hardships caused due to disasters with firm determination. The resolve of the Asian countries to fight the disasters on a war footing is apparent is apparent from the fact that we are all standing today on one platform to devise ways and means for disaster preparedness, mitigation response and relief. I am confident that this joint resolve and our concerted efforts will strengthen further with regional cooperation. We have to develop a culture of preparedness, a culture of quick response, a culture of strategic planning and culture of prevention and mitigation.

India is vulnerable to disasters like cyclones, droughts, earthquakes, floods, landslides, hailstorms and fires. Population growth, urbanization and industrialization are also responsible to some extent in increasing the impact of natural disasters. The disasters result in a major setback in the development process of the affected areas. The Government of India has, therefore, resolved to take steps to place the mechanism for mitigation and management of disaster on a sound footing with a view to reducing the vulnerability of our population to calamities/disasters.

The major steps taken by the Government to reduce hardship caused due to disasters include disaster mitigation concerns into development planning; train and equip special teams in para-military forces to provide specialized help for search and rescue in complex disasters, give focused attention to technologies for disaster mitigation, ensure coordinated and rapid response to a disaster when it strikes, develop projects for modernization and strengthening of early warning systems, mitigation of the impact of earthquakes in seismic vulnerable zones, training of field level officers in mitigation, preparedness, response and relief, strengthening of fire services and developing them as all-hazards response units and create awareness among people right down to village level so that they may constructively contribute in rescues and relief as first responders.

India has a well-defined administrative structure extending right down to the Panchayat level. It has several States and each State is divided into Districts. The districts are sub-divided into sub-divisions. Each sub-division has several blocks and each block has large number of villages. There are Government functionaries at all these levels. They are also used to handling disasters. What is needed is to give them specialized training for specific disasters and provide equipments and other materials for effectively reducing the suffering of people during disasters. In order to achieve this objective, the Government of India has prepared a National Disaster Management Framework, which inter-alia includes risk and vulnerability assessment and dissemination, preventive structural measures to be developed and incorporated in all public and private initiatives, specific disaster response plans at national, State, district, sub-division, block and village levels strong social

mobilization and awareness camps, disaster appraisal as one of the integral components of the development plans, development of mitigation projects, advanced hazard tracking system for climatic and geological hazards, introduction of modern techniques and systems for early warning, communication strategy and community based village preparedness, development of specialized and self-contained search and rescue teams, web-enabled and easy to access inventory of resources development of health professionals, engineers, planners, architects and agriculturists and creation of public awareness and community-training

The time has come for all Asian countries to join hands together to manage disasters and mitigate hardships. I am sure that this Seminar will be able to further strengthen the coordination and cooperation among the Asian countries so as to make all of us more effective in our effort towards preparedness, mitigation, response and relief before, during and after disasters.

On this optimistic note, I wish the Seminar a grand success.

(d) Address of Deputy Prime Minister on the Occasion of GOI Seminar on Indian National Day for Disaster Reduction and RCC3

Honorable Chairman, Board of Trustees and Executive Director, Asian Disaster Preparedness Center, Bangkok, distinguished guests from India and abroad, officers of Central and State Governments, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am glad to have this opportunity of inaugurating the joint Government of India-Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre Seminar on regional cooperation for disaster reduction. We in India observe October 29 as the Indian National Day for Disaster Reduction since on this day, three years ago, a devastating cyclone hit the State of Orissa, leaving more than ten thousand people dead and a larger number injured. There was immense damage to property also. We observe this day to strengthen our resolve to learn from each such calamity and be better prepared to manage such disasters on war footing.

Asia is more vulnerable to disasters. Of the total disasters that occur in the world, about 88 percent devastate Asia. They cause untold human suffering and misery. A severe disaster may affect several countries in Asia. It has, therefore, become imperative to respond to such disaster through regional cooperation. It is time to further strengthen the bonds of friendship, brotherhood, cooperation and coordinated action by all the countries in Asia.

I am happy to note that India is hosting the third meeting of the Regional Consultative Committee of Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), Bangkok. ADPC provides a regional forum for disaster related initiatives. Over the last two decades, ADPC has been proactive in disaster mitigation efforts in various countries of the region, including India. The Government of India is closely associated with ADPC. Joint efforts for disaster prevention, mitigation, response and relief are underway in Gujarat, Uttaranchal, Uttar Pradesh and other States. I sincerely hope that deliberations in this seminar and in the Regional Consultative Committee meeting, which will follow the Seminar, will in bringing us closer, not only in disaster reduction but in all walks of life.

According to the World Disaster Report 2002, the estimated damage due to natural disasters in Asia during the period 1992 to 2001 was to the extent of US \$ 400 thousand million. This does not include the loss of livelihood and support systems that often leave nightmarish scars on the affected population. We have to learn lessons from each disaster, wherever they occur. These lessons have to be incorporated in our efforts for disaster preparedness, prevention and reduction measures. Our foremost task is to identify and determine the needed for comprehensive disaster mitigation.

Earlier our focus was to mitigate hardships caused due to natural disaster. Over the last few decades, man-made disasters have created a new threat. The MIC gas leak in Bhopal, destruction of the twin towers of World Trade Center in USA and an attempt to attack the Indian Parliament soon thereafter are some of the examples highlighting the extent to which the man-made disasters can affect us. Regional cooperation to tackle man-made disaster, particularly the steps to prevent such disasters is, therefore, necessary. Terrorism has now become almost a universal phenomenon. There is a real threat today of disasters through the weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear, biological and chemical related disasters. In order to meet the challenges posed by such threats, regional cooperation at political, humanitarian and scientific levels is the need of the hour.

India is committed to joint efforts and cooperation for disaster management. During the United Nations International Decade for Natural Disasters Reduction in 1994, India had taken the initiative to organize a SAARC Conference on Disaster Management. Initiatives have also been taken to strengthen bilateral and multilateral cooperation measures in the fields relating to science and technology and early warning systems, particularly for cyclone and flood management. These initiatives need to be further enhanced, extended and consolidated to other areas like human resource development, community level preparedness, mitigation measures and capacity building.

The Government of India is committed to develop a comprehensive disaster management mechanism. India is vulnerable to natural disasters due to geo-climatic conditions and large population. The vast pace of growth and expansion has brought forth a range of issues that seek urgent attention at all levels. In the absence of such measures, our population will face grave risk of prospective hazards like air, rail and road accidents, building collapse, electric and forest fires, mine flooding, oil spills, etc. The safeguards within the existing systems are somewhat limited and the risks involved are high. We have taken several initiatives with a view to developing a multi-disciplinary approach to handle different aspects of disaster management. We are hopeful that, in the next few years, we will have preventive, planned and comprehensive disaster management mechanism in place.

The organization of this seminar is a timely step to further strengthen the effective regional cooperation for disaster management. I commend the efforts of all concerned, including Asian Disaster Preparedness Center, National Centre for Disaster Management, various UN agencies and my officers in Ministry in organizing this seminar, which will be followed by deliberations over the next two days to develop a comprehensive disaster management strategy for the entire region. I am sure that this interaction will bear fruitful results for all of us.

Thank you.

(e) Keynote Address by Prof. Dr. Krasae Chanawongse, Chairman, ADPC Board of Trustees at the GOI Seminar on Indian National Day for Disaster Reduction and RCC3

Excellency Mr. L.K Advani, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Home Affairs, Mr. N. Gopaldaswami, Home Secretary, Government of India, Mr. R.C.A Jain, Special Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, Dr. Suvit Yodmani, Executive Director, ADPC, Excellencies, delegate members and observers of ADPC Regional Consultative Committee on Disaster Management, senior officers from the Government of India, Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is indeed a great pleasure for me to join you all this morning. I am very pleased to learn that we are celebrating today not only the 3rd Annual meeting of our ADPC Regional Consultative Committee, but also the Indian National Day for Disaster Reduction.

As we all are aware, rapid population growth, urbanization, environmental degradation and global climate change are all contributing to the increasing frequency and severity of the disasters. We all realize that reducing disaster vulnerability is a key challenge facing the development process of every country. This Indian National Day for Disaster Reduction proves the recognition and priority of the Indian Government accords these issues and their relentless efforts in raising awareness of the public.

The Royal Thai Government, which I have been part of has recently established a new department of disaster management and prevention, consolidating functions, previously of which were carried out by different ministries. Such initiatives are under way in different countries of the region. It is heartening to see the increased emphasis on pre-disaster preparedness and mitigation.

Over the years, we have been witness to the adverse effects of natural calamities that displace thousands of people from their homes, destroy their livelihoods and hamper the national development process of those affected countries significantly.

In Asia, in the year 2002 alone, we have witnessed several countries being hit by severe floods; from Korea to Mekong Delta to the countries of South Asia. Ironically, we also witnessed, the slow spread of drought across the continent. In Cambodia, in July and August of 2002, while communities along the Mekong basin were facing heavy rainfall and bracing themselves for floods, a prolonged drought due to unusually dry weather during the rainy season distressed 551 communes in the South and northwest of the country. The similar situation has prevailed in India and other countries of South Asia, causing floods in one part of the country and drought in other.

These incidents have are further proof that the regional dimension of the disasters, the diminishing boundaries and the benefits of learning from others with similar challenges, necessitate the enhancement of disaster management networks across the region. Disaster managers will have to evolve innovative strategies to deal with emerging challenges. This will require building inter-sectional multi-disciplinary partnerships within and across countries.

I have derived immense satisfaction and pride in leading ADPC as Chairman of its Board of Trustees. As a medical doctor and public health specialist, I have been involved in promoting community health throughout my career. This is very similar to the work all of you do in disaster prevention and mitigation. Over the last 17 years, ADPC has played a unique role in raising awareness, building capacities and promoting cooperation in disaster reduction.

In recognition of its regional role and contribution to capacity building in the Philippines, ADPC was awarded a special plaque by her Excellency President Gloria Arroyo of the Philippines in August this year. This is a befitting tribute to ADPC's contribution to the region.

Having personally participated in the first two meetings of the RCC, I am convinced that the establishment of the RCC and its annual meeting serve an invaluable function. Our Board of Trustees has reviewed your recommended key action areas and feels strongly that the RCC is an important forum to deliberate on priorities of member countries and promote cooperative programs on a regional and sub-regional basis.

In this regard, I encourage all of you to have free and frank discussions and exchange of views to come up with the best ways and means and mechanisms for successful cooperation within the region and beyond. I look forward to participating in the deliberations and hearing about the outcomes.

As conclusion, I would like to thank the Government of India for their support and their collaboration.

I sincerely wish you all a pleasant stay in Delhi and a fruitful meeting.

Thank you very much.

**ANNEX V: FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE 2ND MEETING OF RCC
(Presentation at the 3rd Meeting of RCC on 30 October 2002)**

| | Follow-up Areas | Actions by ADPC |
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| 1 | Advocacy for Total Disaster Risk Management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Paper submitted to the RCC3 ▪ The 2nd Meeting of Regional Organizations and Regional Offices of UN Agencies "2nd Consultative Meeting on Total Disaster Risk Management", jointly hosted by ADRC/OCHA/ADPC on 13-14 June 2002 ▪ 2 days workshop held for Royal Thai Government officials on "Institutional Arrangements for Total Risk Management" from 3-4 April 2002 in Bangkok ▪ Development of Total Disaster Risk Management concept by commissioning of concept paper in 2003 and preparation of checklists ▪ Develop pilot project and conduct national and regional workshops |
| 2 | Community Based Disaster Management | |
| | National CBDM training | CBDM, Urban Disaster Mitigation (UDM) and Flood Risk Management (FRM) training courses at national levels in Indonesia, Nepal, Philippines and Sri Lanka with ADMIT partners, institutionalization of courses |
| | CBDM regional program and country level pilots | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pilot flood project in Hat Yai Thailand and exploration of other opportunities ▪ Development of a pilot earthquake mitigation project in Ahmedabad ▪ Documentation of good practice of CBDM ▪ Development of concept paper for Asian Earthquake Vulnerability Reduction Program for high risk cities and districts |
| | Neighborhoodly search and rescue team | National capacities being built under PEER program and also under ASEAN Regional Program |
| | Actionable community level early warning system | Carry out survey in selected countries |
| 3 | Capacity Building of National Disaster Management Systems | Held Regional workshop on "Best Practices in Disaster Mitigation" in Indonesia, in September. |

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|----------|---|---|
| | Strengthening National Disaster Management Centers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Disaster Reduction Programme for Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam ▪ ADB Technical Assistance project in Uttaranchal and Uttar Pradesh in strengthening their disaster management systems, resulting in establishment of the first state level Ministry of Disaster Management and state level Disaster Mitigation Center in Uttaranchal ▪ Support to Bangladesh, Indonesia, China ▪ ADPC- World Bank Workshop on "Reconstruction Needs Analysis: Planning and Implementation", 13-15 August 2002, Bangkok, Thailand |
| | Disaster Management plans development | Develop plan for regional workshop in sharing of experiences |
| | Exchanging experience on legal and institutional arrangements | Asian Regional workshop held on "Legal and Institutional Arrangements for Disaster Management" from 24-26 April in Bangkok; follow-up publication |
| | Building of NDMIS | Planning for regional information program involving all ADPC's partner organizations |
| | DM training improvement | Strengthening capacities of national institutions and consolidating ADMIT; review of capacities and needs |
| 4 | Flood management and mitigation | |
| | MRC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contribute to regional program on FMMSIP of MRC and participate in Regional Workshop, 21-22 October '02 ▪ Joint ADPC-MRC proposal on "Capacity Building for Preparedness and Planning in the Lower Mekong Basin" submitted to ECHO in September 2002 ▪ Participated in the 1st Annual Flood Forum by MRC from 23-24 May 2002 and gave a presentation on "Enhanced Flood Preparedness at Community, Provincial and National Levels" during the session on "National and Regional Experience on Flood Preparedness - Lessons Learned from Dealing with the Mekong Floods" |
| | ICIMOD/ WMO | Partner in Hindu-Kush Himalayas Hydrological Cycle Observing System (HKH-HYCOS) project |
| 5 | Cooperation with sub-regional bodies | |
| | ASEAN | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Held a workshop on "Development of ASEAN Regional Program on Disaster Management" on 25-27 March 2002 to facilitate the development of the program ▪ Provided assistance in development of the ASEAN Regional Program on Disaster Management, which was presented and endorsed at 12th AEGDM meeting, August 2002 in Hanoi |

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|---|---|---|
| | SAARC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coordinate for hosting South Asia meeting ▪ Consult on updating 1992 regional study ▪ Assisted IMD for SAARC regional workshop in Delhi on 25-28 March 2002 |
| | SOPAC | Supported development of Public Safety Risk Management course with the help of AusAID |
| | Central Asia | Support development of regional center in Georgia |
| 6 | Creating awareness, promoting political will and support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Exploring probability of making presentation on disaster management in Asian Ministerial Meetings ▪ Exploring probability of making presentations on disaster management in Regional meetings of Parliamentarians ▪ Exploring probability of holding meetings with National Committees/ Councils of DM and with Agencies responsible for Finance and Planning |
| 7 | Asian Regional Conference (2004) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dialogue with potential cooperating partners (ISDR, UNDP, WHO) to be held ▪ Draft and issue Brochure in March 2003 |
| 8 | Asian Regional Report on Disaster Reduction (2004) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discuss with ISDR and UNDP on links to Global Report ▪ Constitution of ARRDR Advisory group/ editorial panel ▪ Preparation and presentation of a framework for analysis ▪ Identification of national partners for compilation of information |
| 9 | Building Capacity for management of man-made disasters | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cooperated with MoFA, RTG and Australian Government in organizing one session in Prevention of Terrorism workshop on 17-19 April 2002 (presentation by ARC on "September 11 American Red Cross Responds") ▪ Cooperate with UNEP-DTIE and ROAP on APELL program ▪ Held the first "Seminar on Emergency Planning and Enhancing Safety in Large Buildings' in collaboration with National Fire Protection Association on 4 February, '02 |

ANNEX VI: ADDRESS AT RCC3 CLOSING CEREMONY

Address by Mr. Stephen Walker, First Secretary, AusAID Bangkok, at the 3rd Meeting of the ADPC Regional Consultative Committee on Regional Cooperation.

I regret not being able to be present at this the third Regional Consultative Committee meeting, but I trust that the environment for mutual collaboration, information exchange and the enhancement of professional, and personal, bonds has been as strong as previous years.

I recall standing before you last year at the close of the three-day meeting and posing the question “Why?” “Why” was I there? “Why was Australia behind the ADPC?” “Why did Australia support that three day event?”

The answer then is the same as it is today-commitment. Commitment by the Australian Government; by AusAID as the Australian Government’s aid agency and at heart, the commitment of the Australian people to helping mitigate the human tragedy of disasters throughout our region.

Disasters threaten the vulnerability of people across this region. Disasters by their very nature threaten to undermine hard-won progress made toward poverty reduction across so many communities.

This aspect of disasters, this particular threat, is perhaps more widespread and far reaching than the initial localized impact of some disasters: over the medium to long term environmental degradation from a disaster itself can too readily lead to long term disruption of local food production, transportation infrastructure, loss of income generation across communities, mass movement of families and communities; over burdening of accessible food, water and income sources create a spiraling problem: all of which may take a lifetime to restore.

As I mentioned last year, we can no longer just concern ourselves in acting when disasters strike. We are committed to developing international capacity to help mitigate both crises and suffering. To achieve this our humanitarian program is now integrated across AusAID; permeating all of our strategies and our thinking.

The central theme for the New Delhi meeting is drought. As you may be aware, severe drought is currently plaguing much of the Australian countryside. Also many urban and rural centers are under siege battling bushfires – and for us, summer is still over one month away. It’s a complex situation.

I suggested last year that humanitarian disasters are increasingly complex: Increasing environmental degradation; industrialization, rapid population growth having lead to the emergence of new challenges. The frequency and intensity of disasters; natural and human initiated, are increasing and are increasingly complex. More and more disasters, flood, drought, landslide are labeled as being “the worst in human memory” – more and more people are affected, more and more people suffer.

So I pause this year to ask a new question – “What?” What have we done since last year? What have we done to learn, to network, and to bring about change? What has been the value of the last three days and the last twelve months?

Although I’m not present, I am aware of the program and from my good friend Dr. Suvit, that there has been a great deal of information sharing and exchange in the formal agenda. I always personally feel that it is in the “informal” agenda of an ADPC meeting that the true exchanges are made.

I hope that in these discussions it is evident that we did not sit idly by after meeting last year; that we networked and used the bonds to enhance our individual understanding and programs. I am sure it is the case: I hope it is the case.

Last year this meeting followed the events in New York and Washington. This year we follow Bali. The world grows more complex. Disaster management – the very meaning of disaster – grows more complex.

As I reflected previously, the complexity of disaster mitigation and management cannot be solved at the individual level. Certainly not as individual or even as individual countries. I strongly believe that through supporting regional and international organizations, networks and activities including this consultative meeting, we can start to address these emerging challenges.

The networks created and built upon here – the learning and the sharing of ideas that have taken place must continue and must be shaped into action. Regional disaster preparedness cannot be fully realized without going beyond national boundaries. For me, disaster preparedness is one of the better examples of where we can become greater than the sum of our parts.

I'm sure that the answer to last year's question remains the same. I still think we unanimously share the same sense of commitment: political and personal.

Whether or not we can fully answer this year's question as to what has been achieved perhaps requires some time for reflection. But the first step to ensuring a positive response lies with you. I again urge you to capture the past few days; to maintain the networks; to draw on and expand the learning and to maintain the commitment that we all share.

Thank you once again.