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## **Official Statement of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for APMCDRR 2022**

We would like to thank UNDRR for convening APMCDRR 2022, and our special appreciation to the Government of Australia as well as Queensland Government for hosting this event.

As one of the most disaster-prone regions, the Asia-Pacific region takes a special place in JICA's disaster risk reduction cooperation program. Our support in the region is important not only to support the countries protect their citizens and development gains from disasters but also to achieve regional economic prosperity, peace and stability, human security, and sustainable development.

During the first five years (2015-2020) of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR), JICA provided USD 370 million in technical assistance, USD 883 million in grants, and USD 7.2 billion in loans to help strengthen disaster risk reduction in developing countries. The support entailed hazard monitoring and risk assessment, strengthening of DRR governance, the establishment of DRR and critical infrastructure, with 120,000 cadres of DRR experts and leaders to promote proactive disaster risk reduction.

Reviewing the progress of global target of the SFDRR, there are a trend of improvement in disaster numbers but some challenges we must address and accelerate efforts to achieve the SFDRR goals.

In Asia-Pacific, the number of casualties caused by natural hazard has shown some improvement, and with continued leadership and efforts by respective countries, disaster risk reduction has become increasingly understood as an essential policy domain to achieve long-term sustainable development.



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JICA has constantly urged our partner countries to demonstrate increases pre-disaster investment in DRR. We have observed that countries like the Philippines have steadily and continuously increase pre-disaster investments in DRR through gaining confidence with real effective past DRR projects such as the Mangahan floodway in the Pasig-Marikina river basin in the metropolitan Manila.

The flood mitigation measures of the Philippines helped to minimize the impact of the Typhoon Ulysses in 2020 by reducing inundation and economic damage in metropolitan Manila by 85%. This was the outcome of the Government of the Philippines's disaster risk reduction investment since the 1970s that continued hand in hand with economic development.

The cases of the Philippines shows that DRR actions are not an expense but an investment that can yield a remarkable impact over many years. Such "hard" structural DRR countermeasures are also the results of long-term continuous "soft" non-structural efforts in human resource development and institution building with legitimating authority backed by adequate budgets to implement the most impactful risk reduction measures.

We believe that the countries observing those outcomes have a continued strong individual and institutional leadership combined with the high-quality plans and strategies backed by scientific evidence and budget to implement the most impactful risk reduction measures. JICA will continue to support incremental and steady advancement disaster risk reduction in our partner countries.

The governments across the Asia-Pacific region can and should play a more substantial role in implementing the most fundamental, high-stake, and impactful disaster risk reduction activities and promoting pre-disaster investment that protects economic development as well as the most vulnerable population.



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Today, the government's leadership becomes even more critical in the vulnerabilities building up through rapid economic growth, urbanization, and increasingly frequent and intense climate-induced disasters.

As per Paragraph-19 (a) of the SFDRR, “Each State has the primary responsibility to prevent and reduce disaster risk”. Recognizing the still insufficient pre-disaster investments despite the rapid economic growth in the developing countries, the public sector particularly central governments should play its imperative role to minimize the most fundamental and prevalent disaster risk that is becoming increasingly intense and frequent due to climate change and human interventions e.g. urbanization.

On the other hand, the SFDRR mid-term review process reminds us that the current global high-level indicators might not be enough to evaluate the concrete progress achieved by a particular DRR intervention, hence does not drive financial investment in DRR as much as we thought. Therefore, JICA advocates for having a tool or method that measures the level of DRR investment vis-à-vis reduced risk/hazard exposure and remaining risk. Such a tool would guide countries to objectively assess the progress and risk status and accelerate their financial investment in the most effective DRR measures. For maximizing the DRR investment, the role of the scientific community's contribution is also very important.

To accelerate DRR cooperation, JICA devises a new organizational strategy - the Global Agenda for Disaster Risk Reduction and Reconstruction (the Global Agenda). The Global Agenda demonstrates the coherence in JICA's disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation approaches, with a vision to reverse the trend in economic loss and damage from disasters. Under the Global Agenda, JICA prioritizes the three clusters of DRR actions as articulated below:



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1. Physical/structural risk mitigation infrastructures that provide broader protection of people and national development against low-intensity and high-frequency hazards before disasters;
2. Robust overall DRR governance, including the institutional capacity for hazard monitoring and risk assessment; and
3. Post-disaster resilient recovery through which the above two cluster priorities are implemented

On this occasion, JICA renews its commitment to accelerate the support to promote DRR, working hand-in-hand with the international community to help transform the Asia Pacific region's future through disaster risk reduction.

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