

[Opening Remarks by co–Chair Ambassador Thongphakdi]

Thank you very much.

I am honoured by the trust extended to me as we together embark upon our journey to Sendai.

Let me pick up my co–Chair’s comment on shared responsibility.

Several regional platforms for disaster risk reduction and other regional meetings have met in Africa, the Americas, Asia, the Pacific and Europe in the first half of this year, with the Arab States to follow.

I attended the sixth session of the Pacific Platform for Disaster Risk Management in Fiji, and the sixth Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Thailand.

I saw first–hand the ability and commitment of participating countries and all major groups to mobilize action on various

issues that impact disaster risk reduction: from climate change adaptation to environmental protection, from gender inclusiveness to the needs as well as the meaningful contribution of at-risk and other disadvantaged groups, and from the role of local communities to that of the private sector.

I also heard solutions being discussed in the context of sound, scientific thinking and the need for increased partnerships and capacity building.

We will now consider the outcomes from the regional platforms – alongside the outcomes of all consultations that have taken place since March 2012 – as we work towards the development of a future framework that the international community will consider at the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, next March in Sendai.

We should strive to maintain the energy and drive shown by participants at the regional platforms and meetings, and aim for the same standard of quality and integrity, using a whole-of-government, indeed, a whole-of-society approach.

Let us therefore aim to produce a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction that is forward-looking and inspirational, but also actionable, measurable and well-supported.

To this end, we look forward to engaging with you at this first Preparatory Committee meeting and beyond – in our common effort to build resilience, safeguard lives and ensure a sustainable future. Thank you.

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