



Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction

Tunisia 9-13 October 2018

Fourth Arab Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction Tunis Declaration on Disaster Risk Reduction

13 October 2018

We, the ministers and heads of Arab governmental delegations and representatives of regional and international governmental and non-governmental organizations participating in the Africa Arab Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction held in Tunis from 9-13 October 2018; express our gratitude and appreciation to the leadership, the Government and the people of Tunisia for hosting the Africa Arab Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction. We also thank the League of Arab States, the African Union and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) for their effective contribution to ensure the desired results of this conference, which aims to address the challenges related to the issue of disaster risk reduction in the Arab world:

We declare the following:

1. **Express our deep concern** at the increased frequency of natural hazards, including those exacerbated by unsustainable human activity such as drought, agricultural land degradation, desertification, locust infestation, storms, floods, extreme weather phenomena, forest fires, hurricanes and geological hazards such as earthquakes, tsunamis, landslides. This is in addition to other hazards of biological, technological, chemical, nuclear and bacteriological nature which are man-made, such as the risks of pollution and harmful radiation, resulting in damage, loss of life and deterioration of livelihoods especially among vulnerable populations, and population displacement, in addition to environmental economic, social and physical losses.

2. **Emphasize the objectives, priorities and targets** of the Sendai Framework and the Arab Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction in moving from disaster management to disaster risk management and focusing on risk drivers such as climate change, conflicts of various forms, lack and depletion of natural resources, unplanned rapid urbanization and poverty, unplanned development, improper handling of vulnerability and its factors and components, and the need to develop and strengthen prevention and early warning systems, mitigate their effects and build back better.
3. **We emphasize strengthening the capacities of local communities** to address disaster risks, adapt to climate change and prevent the emerging of new risks by strengthening infrastructure while integrating disaster risk management into sustainable development plans and objectives based on a participatory and integrated approach for all: governance and government institutions, civil society, private sector, and universities and scientific research institutions. Furthermore, we emphasize addressing extensive risks and reducing their negative impact on the most vulnerable groups, including women, persons with disabilities, elderly, children, youth, displaced persons and victims of forced migration, taking into account environmental, economic and social damage resulting from occupation specifically the Israeli occupation of Palestine and other Arab lands.
4. **We Take into account** the statement of the Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction in Cancún 2017 "Ensuring Infrastructure and Housing Resilience", the outcomes of the first Arab Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction and the Aqaba Declaration on Disaster Risk Reduction for Cities 2013 and the outcome of the Second Arab Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, The Sharm El Sheikh Declaration on Disaster Risk Reduction 2014, the outcomes of the Third Arab Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction and the Doha Declaration on Disaster Risk Reduction 2017 and the Arab Summit Resolution in its 29th session (Jerusalem Summit, Dhahran) No. 733 of 2018, where the Arab Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction 2030 was adopted.
5. **We Emphasize the importance of ensuring and enhancing** harmony and coordination among Arab countries at the level of plans and their alignment with global and regional programs, in a manner that does not affect neighboring countries, as well as the importance of continuing to implement programs at the national and regional level related to building the capacity of targeted communities to be resilient and address the challenges and risks of disasters. This is in addition to supporting programs to adapt to and mitigate climate change and halt environmental degradation and integrating them into sustainable development plans as a main tenant of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030) and the sustainable development goals and relevant agreements on environment and climate change, including the Paris Agreement, the Addis Ababa Plan of Action on Financing for Development, the New Urban Agenda, and the agenda for humanity.

6. **We appreciate the vital role** played by stakeholder groups, the private sector, research centers, universities, civil society organizations at local and community levels, as well as partnerships with government agencies and local communities.
7. **We appreciate the important** role played by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction in coordinating and supporting global and regional efforts to implement and monitor the Sendai Framework through joint action with governments, agencies, centers, international and regional organizations, civil society organizations, voluntary organizations, the private sector and research and academic centers.
8. **We also appreciate the role** of the League of Arab States and its specialized Arab organizations in coordinating and supporting Arab efforts to assess and implement the Arab Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction 2030.

With the aforementioned in this declaration, we call on all governments, partners and stakeholders to:

1. Implement sustainable development policies integrated with disaster risk reduction strategies and programs that are inclusive of all levels.
2. Effectively coordinate with a view towards accelerating the implementation of the Sendai Framework and the Arab Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction at the national and local levels, while monitoring and periodically evaluating the progress made in implementing plans and programs.
3. Take urgent and effective action on the development and implementation of national and local policies and strategies for disaster risk reduction in order to achieve Target E of the Sendai framework.
4. Develop and update mechanisms for the collection and analysis of data and statistics related to disasters and losses, in addition to managing and assessing risks and preparing hazard maps in line with the Sendai Framework.
5. Sharing experiences and best practices among countries in disaster risk reduction.
6. Develop programs of action that enable media dissemination, awareness, education and communication on disaster risks and ensure access to data and information and make it available all by means of modern communication.
7. Promote the active participation of women and youth in the leadership, design and implementation of gender-sensitive disaster risk reduction policies, plans and programs through joint efforts of the public and private sectors, supported by appropriate legal frameworks and resource allocation.
8. Consider the needs of women (including female migrant), older persons, children, youth and persons with disabilities in disaster risk reduction policies and plans, while enhancing stakeholder participation in the DRR workshop. "Catalysing Sendai Framework implementation through enhanced (Africa-Arab) partnerships and collaborations: Regional, sub-regional and national perspectives" and voluntary action data for stakeholders.

9. Promote the integration of climate change adaptation and mitigation measures and disaster risk reduction into policies and practices at all levels, including the adoption of proactive approaches and policies in the field of renewable energy to reduce the impact of disasters that threaten the ecosystem. This is in addition to promoting scientific research and the development of energy efficiency technologies in line with the global trends associated with the sustainable development goals 2030, especially those related to the environment, energy, climate change and natural resources.
10. Ensure the use of modern technologies in prevention and management when it comes to disasters and climate change
11. Develop programs and plans for disaster preparedness, response and recovery through better coordination for effective linkages between relief, rehabilitation and development
12. Enhance the role of science, technology and communications to contribute to disaster risk reduction, support decision-making based on scientific foundations. This is in addition to developing an expert knowledge base with Arab participation and benefiting from the applied research and studies carried out by the Arab Science and Technology Advisory Group on Disaster Risk Reduction.
13. Consolidate an approach based on human security and health and environmental safety in disaster risk reduction policies and practices.
14. Promote public and private risk-based investment in infrastructure with resilient characteristics to prevent new risks, and the use of reconstruction in recovery as an opportunity to "build back better"
15. Commit at the national and regional levels to periodically review the progress made in implementing the Sendai Framework through the Sendai Framework Monitor.
16. Use the International Day and the Arab Day for Disaster Risk Reduction and the World Tsunami Awareness Day opportunities to promote community awareness and achieve better understanding of risks.
17. Establish and develop permanent national platforms on disaster risk management that has comprehensive powers to harness the potential and ensure coordination among all stakeholders during disasters.

In order to meet the challenges facing our Arab region, we will:

- Implement the measures recommended in the Tunis Declaration and activate the recommendations contained in this Declaration in the horizon of the upcoming Arab Regional Platform in 2020.
- Coordinate and collaborate with partners and stakeholders to implement the Arab Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and its work program to support the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and to provide updates on progress through the Arab Coordination Mechanism and other regional platforms.
- Invite stakeholder groups to submit voluntary work statements and report periodically on progress made through the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, Regional Office for Arab States.

We call upon the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR)
- Regional Office for Arab States - to strengthen coordination among disaster risk reduction partners and stakeholders in order to achieve alignment with the sustainable development goals 2030, the Paris Climate Change Agreement and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 to ensure effective integration of disaster risk reduction into sustainable development strategies.

The Arabic version is the official version of the Tunis Declaration on Disaster Risk Reduction *