



Asia-Europe Meeting

## **ASEM Manila Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction and Management**

4-6 June 2014, Manila, Philippines

### **“Post- Haiyan/Yolanda – A Way Forward”**

#### **CHAIR’S SUMMARY STATEMENT**

1. The ASEM Manila Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction and Management “Post-Haiyan/Yolanda – A Way Forward”, hosted by the Philippines, co-hosted by the European Union (EU), Japan and Switzerland, and co-sponsored by Belgium, Germany, Hungary, Indonesia, Spain, Sweden and Viet Nam, was held in Manila, Philippines on 04-06 June 2014. This event was approved and welcomed by ASEM Leaders at the Ninth Asia-Europe Summit in Vientiane on 05-06 November 2012, with a view towards furthering the collective commitment of ASEM partners for greater collaboration and coordination in Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM). The Conference reviewed the global state of play in DRRM, proposed improvements, introduced new elements drawn from lessons learned from mega disasters, particularly from super typhoon Haiyan/Yolanda.
2. The Conference gathered more than two hundred eighty (280) participants, including officials and representatives from ASEM Partners, United Nations and other International Organizations, Civil Society, NGOs, Academia and the Private Sector. The Conference was chaired by Hon. Maria Zeneida Angara Collinson, Assistant Secretary for European Affairs, Department of Foreign Affairs (Philippines) and Hon. Agostino Miozzo, European External Action Service (EEAS) Managing Director for Crisis Response and Coordination Department. The list of participants is attached as **Annex A**.
3. Before the formal commencement of the Conference, the participants visited Leyte Province and Tacloban City, in order to obtain a first-hand view of the effects of super typhoon Haiyan and relief, recovery and reconstruction efforts being undertaken. In Tanauan, Leyte, the participants launched the ASEM E-Learning Project and laid a commemorative capsule at Bislig Elementary School, visited the Gawad Kalinga Resettlement Site and engaged local government officials in a Town Hall Meeting. The Meeting took place at the Tanauan Municipal Hall, with Leyte Governor Dominic Petilla, Tanauan Mayor

Pel Tecson, Palo Mayor Remedios Petilla, and Tacloban City Chief of Staff Lila Czarina Aquitana.

4. The Conference was opened by the Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines, Hon. Albert del Rosario. In his welcoming speech Secretary del Rosario thanked all ASEM partners for their steadfast solidarity and generous support, and stated that the collective wisdom of the over two-hundred (200) Conference participants forms the basis of the Tacloban Declaration. He remarked that the Conference is a timely action to meet the global challenge of disasters, and that shared commitment to DRRM springs not only from being inter-connected through global value and supply chains, but from the over-arching imperative to sustain and ensure a safe and decent life for all.
5. Hon. Kristalina Georgieva, EU Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response delivered the opening statement for the Conference. She stated that that the participants' visit to Tacloban made it clear why it is critically important to the world to embrace the task of building resilient societies. The Commissioner admired the strength and resilience of the Philippines and the Filipino People, and noted that what has been achieved in the six months since her first visit to Leyte can be considered remarkable. She further observed that the economic costs of disasters have quadrupled over the past three decades, and that the leading priority is to invest more in prevention and preparedness.
6. The keynote address was delivered by H.E. Benigno S. Aquino III, President of the Republic of the Philippines. President Aquino stated that despite the best efforts of the Philippines, super typhoon Haiyan/ Yolanda was unlike any other typhoon ever encountered, overwhelming preparedness efforts. He emphasized that the Philippines was pro-active in its response and recovery efforts from Day One, with the assistance of volunteers, as well as friends and partners from around the globe. The President underscored the importance of science and technology in DRRM, noting the Philippines' own innovations and initiatives such as Project NOAH and facilitating citizens' access to critical information. He concluded by stating that the reality of climate change has altered the way we live, and challenged the participants with the choice: to act collectively now, to act individually, or not to act at all – and suffer collectively. Whatever choice is made, the President warned, we are sure to reap its consequences.
7. During the opening plenary session of the Conference, ASEM and other DRRM leaders shared their perspectives on and recommendations for ASEM DRRM cooperation in the post-Haiyan/Yolanda context. The speakers represented a range of international, regional and national perspectives, emphasizing that recent post-Haiyan/Yolanda and other mega disaster

operations have yielded a wealth of best practices and cataloguing of challenges for the improvement of global DRRM policy and practice. The list of speakers is attached as **Annex B**.

8. The Conference conducted its work in four Working Groups (WGs) and made the following observations/recommendations to advance DRRM cooperation between and among ASEM Partners and other international DRRM stakeholders:

**Working Group 1 - Technology and Innovation for DRRM (Applying *Innovation, Science and Technology to Policy and Practice*)**

- Technology is a great enabler for cooperation in times of disaster, if correctly used and embedded in DRRM efforts. Strong cooperation has developed between science and policy makers as well as the private sector in the use of weather related technologies mainly addressing early warning for disasters.
- There are many good examples of innovative approaches to community involvement in disaster management, such as health mapping, agricultural livelihood resiliency, micro-insurance, and capacity building of local governments. A key challenge is to scale up these pilot schemes to make them part of mainstream policy.
- Open Data and Data Quality improvements as well as risk assessment and mapping are key building blocks for policy making. Data sharing including of satellite imagery should be further promoted.
- Addressing the gaps in scientific knowledge and communicating research findings to local communities is urgently needed. For example, ecosystem based solutions to disaster risk reduction (DRR) show strong potential and are being pursued but with mixed results.
- Development of national roadmaps, building on international and regional cooperation mechanisms, for research and development for disaster resilience is vital. They can facilitate the development of standards, improvements in technological interoperability and wider sharing of practices and data.

**Working Group 2 - Role of Stakeholders – National and Local Governments, NGOs, the Local Community, Media and the Private Sector (*Strengthening the Role of the State and other DRRM Stakeholders in Disaster Response and Coordination*)**

- The role of states, encompassing the leadership and collaboration of national and local governments, and among local government units, is central in building preparedness, resilience, reducing risk and managing disasters.

- It is important to highlight an ex-ante approach for DRRM, with focus on prevention, response, recovery and building the resiliency of all stakeholders and institutions.
- Civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations and people's organizations are essential in broadening community and people-centered DRRM.
- Military organizations, working in coordination and under the leadership of civil government, contribute effectively towards disaster response and management.
- Media should participate in the DRRM process, particularly for helping raise DRRM community awareness and accountability, and through story production which is strategic, accurate, empowering, and uplifting. The value of culture and the arts is recognized in healing the trauma of victims.

**Working Group 3 – Roles of Stakeholders – Regional and International Organizations (*Improving the international response system through specialization and coordination*)**

- The interface between national and international efforts regarding disaster response, preparedness and prevention needs to be further strengthened.
- The better communities, local and national governments prepare for disasters, the better prepared they are to receive international aid.
- We must become much better at using best practices and learning from others.
- It is important to continuously nourish a culture of resilience and sustainability.

**Working Group 4 - Rehabilitation and Recovery – Challenges and Opportunities (*Recovering from Disasters and Building Back Better Communities*)**

- The disaster recovery and reconstruction phase is an opportunity to strengthen resilience by adopting the “build back better” (BBB) principle and by mainstreaming DRR. BBB should be a key component of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2 (HFA2)
- The revival of livelihood and local economy, including decent employment and risk finance, should be a priority in the reconstruction process in order to achieve sustainable development.
- DRR investment is essential in achieving sustainable development as well as in building a resilient society, and should also be integrated into the post-2015 development agenda.
- It is crucial to incorporate DRR in every stage and sector of development plans (e.g., land use, urban and spatial planning, socio-economic development plans, post-disaster construction planning).
- Good governance is key to effective rehabilitation and recovery.

Transparency, accountability, and multi-stakeholder participation will provide an enabling environment for DRR.

9. The Conference adopted the ***Post-Haiyan Tacloban Declaration***, which captured the commitment of the Conference's participants to advance DRRM cooperation and collaboration, drawing on the best practices developed and lesson learned after super typhoon Haiyan/Yolanda.
10. The Conference endorsed the submission, through the ASEM Senior Officials Meeting, the Post- Haiyan Tacloban Declaration to ASEM Leaders during the 10th ASEM Summit in Milan on 16-17 October 2014, and endorse the same as an ASEM contribution to the post-2015 framework for DRR. The Conference further agreed to endorse the Declaration and invited other ASEM Partners to consider advocating the Post-Haiyan Tacloban Declaration in upcoming international, regional, national and local DRRM meetings and events, especially during the discussions on the post-2015 framework for DRR.

The Participants expressed their appreciation to the Conference Host the Philippines and co-Hosts Japan, Switzerland and the European Union, and co-sponsors Belgium, Germany, Hungary, Indonesia, Spain, Sweden and Vietnam, as well as Partners from the international humanitarian assistance system and DRRM stakeholders.

Manila, Philippines, 6 June 2014