



ASEM Manila Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction and Management

**“Post- Haiyan – A Way Forward”
Manila, Philippines
04-06 June 2014**

Theme: “A Stronger Asia-Europe Partnership to Meet the Challenges of Mega Disasters”

Background

Mega disasters are fast becoming the new norm. In the last decade, ASEM partners suffered large-scale disasters including: the Great East Japan earthquake and tsunami, the Indian Ocean tsunami, cyclone Nargis in Myanmar, the massive flooding in Europe and, in November 2013, super typhoon Haiyan/Yolanda in the Philippines.

Mega disasters are putting to a test the coping ability of nations, regions, and indeed, the world. The effectiveness and adequacy of established disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) mechanisms, systems and practices are being called to question. In the face of mega disasters, the role and functions of national governments, local governments, regional and international organizations, civil society, NGOs and the private sector are being re-examined and reassessed. The role of new actors, such as the military, merits discussion. The ideal interface among these actors to draw out the needed synergy in the face of limited resources needs discussion, debate and agreement. New protocols may be necessary.

During the 9th ASEM Summit on 05-06 November 2012 in Laos, ASEM Leaders underlined the need to strengthen collective preparedness and response to disasters. They endorsed the Philippine proposal to hold a Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction and Management. In the 11th ASEM Foreign Ministers Meeting on 11-12 November 2013 in India, ASEM Partners agreed to mainstream disaster risk reduction and management in the ASEM agenda. Ministers supported greater collaboration and coordination in disaster risk reduction and management and mitigation. ASEM Partners were urged to match the unparalleled effects brought about by super typhoon Haiyan/Yolanda with an exceptional Asia-Europe cooperative response. The ASEM Manila Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) will build on results of other global and regional

Conferences including the ASEM High Level Meeting on Disaster Prevention and Relief in Response to Climate Change held on 18-19 November 2013 in Vietnam.

The ASEM Manila Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction and Management translates to action the collective commitment of ASEM Partners for greater collaboration and coordination in DRRM. In collaboration with key actors in the international DRRM community, ASEM Partners will examine the current state of play in this sector, study the link between climate change and the rise in disasters, re-examine the roles of DRRM actors, propose improvements and reform in DRRM policies and practices, where necessary, validate best practices, and consolidate proposals for a post-2015 global architecture on DRRM.

General Objectives

The ASEM Manila Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) aims to:

1. Highlight lessons learned from super typhoon Haiyan/Yolanda and other mega disasters to validate or negate heretofore accepted best practices in the DRRM sphere;
2. Actively promote and introduce new innovation, technology, systems and services in disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery and rehabilitation, and harness the private sector and scientific community in all these aspects;
3. Strengthen partnerships and collaboration between Asia and Europe in DRRM in the macro and micro-levels;
4. Propose a delineation of functions among traditional and new DRRM actors, an effective coordination mechanism, and new protocols, where needed; and
5. Contribute to the global discourse and help create the post-2015 global architecture on DRRM.

Organization of the Manila Conference

Participants will be invited to visit one major site of the mega disaster, Tacloban, on the first day, June 4, to put into context the discussions in the next two days of the Conference proper. A plenary session will be convened at the formal start of the Conference on June 5, and participants will choose from among four (4) working groups focused on four (4) sub-themes. In the afternoon of the second and final day of the Manila Conference, outputs of the four (4) working groups will be presented

and discussed in plenary and a concluding document called The Tacloban Declaration will be adopted.

Working Groups and Sub Themes

There will be four working groups discussing focused sub-themes, as follows:

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

Advances in science and technology and innovative systems have made it possible to reduce disaster costs and risks through early warning systems, hazard mapping, risk assessment, disaster simulation, information technology, prevention of epidemics, insurance schemes, etc. The challenge is on strengthening the interface among scientists, entrepreneurs, policy makers and communities on the ground. Research and development on DRRM must be responsive to the needs of the populations at risk in the same manner that technologies should be made available and accessible to decision makers. The aim of this working group is to share and discuss available innovation, technology and services on DRRM that could be easily accessed, established and installed, ideally with a “fail safe” mechanism, sustainable and affordable.

Working Group 2 – Roles of Stakeholders - National and Local Governments, NGOs, the Local Community and the Private Sector (Strengthening Disaster Response and Coordination)

The country affected by a mega disaster retains the primary role and responsibility to deal with the crisis. The national government's role to coordinate, manage and facilitate initiatives and efforts of the various actors needs to be strengthened not only because of the unprecedented scale of mega disasters but also in light of the increase in the number of key players involved. Various stakeholders need to fulfil their unique role and exercise their comparative advantage to best achieve the synergy required to meet emergency needs in a challenged environment of scarce or unavailable resources. The extent and nature of these roles are informed, in turn, by the various stages of mega disasters. National and local laws must be brought up to speed to ensure a relevant framework and policy for mega disasters. The role of the military must be based on what is legal, necessary and acceptable. NGOs have proliferated in many spheres and the challenges include: ensuring equity of assistance and a better fit of the micro and macro imperatives. The private sector has not been an established key player in DRRM heretofore. But there is no doubt that businesses and enterprises must be involved in DRRM, not as a matter of charity or corporate responsibility but as a means to survive and remain viable in the face of mega disasters. The local community is the basic unit of any DRRM effort. Its

grassroots knowledge, socio-cultural network and expertise could be harnessed and rationalized to create DRRM systems that work speedily and efficiently.

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

National actors alone may not be able to cope with the effects of mega disasters. The scale and scope of devastation warrant the assistance of regional and international organizations. Their reach, expertise, resources and experience are vital in the various phases of dealing with mega disasters. However, global resources are finite and hence, there is a need for specialization, flexibility and greater coordination among regional and international organizations. This need becomes even more compelling against a background of natural disasters increasing in frequency and ferocity. Methods to enhance and improve the international disaster response system will be discussed in this working group. During complex disasters such as mega disasters, the relationship between national actors, on the one hand, and regional and international actors on the other hand, need to be harmonious, symbiotic and synergistic.

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

Post-disaster rehabilitation, recovery and reconstruction are major challenges not only in terms of costs but also in securing consensus among stakeholders of what constitutes “building back better”. Post-disaster physical infrastructure and socio-economic systems need to be designed to adequately withstand the very real possibility of another mega-disaster. A credible Post Disaster Needs Assessment and a comprehensive Recovery and Rehabilitation Plan are critical in order to restore and improve the facilities, livelihood, living conditions and organizational capacities of the affected communities. At the same time, national and international actors should ensure that reconstruction interventions are responsive to the needs of the affected communities. Climate change is an important source of risk to the achievement of long-term recovery objectives. Long term recovery should ensure that the rehabilitation and reconstruction of physical and socio-economic infrastructures are as disaster and climate-proof as possible. Hence, it is important to integrate climate change adaptation plans and strategies in any rehabilitation and recovery program. In this WG, the Post-Haiyan/Yolanda Needs Assessment and Comprehensive Recovery and Rehabilitation Plan will be presented for discussion and improvement. This WG should aim to come up with effective rehabilitation and recovery strategies and designs. Disaster risk financing and other collaborative activities that can contribute to strengthening the capacities of ASEM Partners in coping with future mega-disasters will be discussed.

Date and Venue

Manila, Philippines
04-06 June 2014

Participants

Target participants are senior officials from national and local governments, senior representatives from regional and international organizations, NGO leaders, captains of industry, experts and scientists principally from ASEM member countries. ASEM Partners may send up to four participants.

Expected Output

The Manila Conference on DRRM will produce the **Tacloban Declaration** which will be reported to the ASEM10 Summit in Milan on 16-17 October 2014, and presented to the successor global conference of DRRM in 2015. The **Tacloban Declaration** will contain proposals to better manage mega disasters along with validated best practices and will contribute to the design of a post-2015 global architecture on DRRM.

Expenses

Participants are expected to bear the costs of their international airfares and accommodation in the Philippines. The Philippine Government will cover the local organization of the Conference and together with the co-hosts and co-sponsors, participation costs of Conference speakers and moderators and the site visit to Tacloban.

Draft Program

Day 0	Arrival of Participants
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Day 1 (04 June 2014)	
09:00 H – 16:00 H	Optional Tour to Tacloban
19:00 H	Welcome Reception

Day 2(05 June 2014)

0800 H – 0900 H	Registration of Participants
0900 H – 0930 H	Official Welcome (PHL)
	Opening Remarks (Asian Co-hosts)
	Opening Remarks (European Co-hosts)

0930 H – 1030 H	Plenary Session The Global State of Play of Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) and the Post-2015 Framework for DRRM (HFA2)
1030 H – 1100 H	Coffee Break
1100 H – 1230 H	Plenary Session
1230 H – 1400 H	Lunch
1400 H – 1700 H	Simultaneous Break-out Sessions <i>Working Group 1 – Technology and Innovation for DRRM (Applying Innovations, Science and Technology to Policy and Practice)</i> <i>Working Group 2 – Roles of Stakeholders - National and Local Governments, NGOs, the Local Community and the Private Sector (Strengthening Disaster Response and Coordination)</i> <i>Working Group3 - Roles of Stakeholders – Regional and International Organizations (Improving the international response system through specialization and coordination)</i> <i>Working Group 4– Rehabilitation and Recovery – Challenges and Opportunities (Recovering from Disasters and Building Back Better Communities)</i>
1900 H	Official Dinner

Day 3 (06 June 2014)

0830 H – 1130 H	Continuation of Simultaneous Break-out Sessions Wrap-up of each Working Group (WG 2 & 3 to join together)
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1130 H – 1200 H	Submission of report and outputs of each WG to the Conference Secretariat
1200 H – 1330 H	Lunch
1330 H – 1600 H	Plenary Session Report and Presentation of each Working Group Presentation of the Tacloban Declaration
1600 H – 1630 H	Coffee Break
1630 H – 1700 H	Adoption of the Tacloban Declaration Closing Ceremony

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