



**SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL STATEMENT TO
THE GLOBAL PLATFORM FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION,
DELIVERED BY DR MMAPHAKA TAU, DEPUTY DIRECTOR
GENERAL (HEAD): NATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT
CENTRE, SOUTH AFRICA.
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Co-Chairs, (UNDRR and Government of Switzerland), honourable Heads of delegation, Disaster Risk Reduction partners representing various sectors, organisations and disciplines, and distinguished guests.

South Africa wishes to extend its sincere appreciation to the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction for convening and organising the GPDRR2019 and the Government of Switzerland for hosting this prestigious event in the scenic city of Geneva.

As with other countries across the globe, SA is already experiencing significant effects of climate change, as evidenced through increased

temperatures and climate variability. This manifest through a wide range of hazards, including drought, fires, floods, cyclones and severe storms that often trigger widespread hardship and devastation which threaten livelihoods, increase vulnerability and undermine hard-earned development gains. SA has, over the past three years, been battling against the effects of the worst drought recorded since 1926. We are also currently dealing with the consequences of devastating floods that affected three provinces in recent weeks.

To prevent and mitigate the effects of these phenomena, the country is putting measures in place to strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and disasters, the current and anticipated impacts of climate change, and the protection of critical ecosystem services and natural resources as well as measures to prevent and mitigate anthropogenic risks. The work of the security cluster also reinforces the disaster risk management efforts through sustained humanitarian support as well as safety and security measures.

In our efforts towards risk informed and risk averse communities, our South African Weather Services continues to issue different weather alerts to the National Disaster Management Centre and the wider SA public, including to the media on a daily basis. The NDMC also has a GIS web portal platform which is able to ingest the Common Alert Protocol (CAP) for severe weather warnings.

The GIS portal is aimed at furthering the dissemination of the comprehensive risk profiles that we developed. The NDMC and SAWS have also collaborated to implement Impact Based Forecasting, which is a new component of the SA-Multi Hazard Early Warning System (MHEWS) and this is bearing fruit.

The disaster management legislative and policy framework in South Africa aligns well with the objectives of the SFDRR. Emerging from an assessment in 2018, there is general compliance with the Act in areas such as institutional capacity, risk assessment, risk reduction, education, training and research with areas for improvement ranging from risk quantification, risk reduction through compliance with bylaws, funding for risk reduction and recording of disaster losses.

Aligned to the Sendai Framework, South Africa has made provision in recent legislative amendments, to expand the existing national institutional structure (the National Disaster Management Advisory Forum) to serve as the SA National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction thereby emphasising the multi sectoral nature of disaster risk reduction and the responsibility of stakeholders to take collaborative action to reduce risk.

Notwithstanding the substantial gains that have been made in implementing many aspects of the SFDRR, applying the data collection architecture in the SA context to establish and maintain a reliable report

on the achievement of the SFDRR targets, is proving more cumbersome and complex than anticipated. We therefore continue to engage stakeholders across multiple sectors towards the enhancement of systems to adequately record and report disaster losses.

Progress in achieving the Target (E):

In South Africa, organs of state are required to develop and implement comprehensive disaster risk management plans, which include performing risk assessments, mapping exposure and vulnerability, providing details of disaster risk reduction and management strategies including particulars of how the needs of vulnerable groups such as women, children, the elderly and disabled are to be addressed.

The NDMC has reviewed 11 sector plans over the past 2 years. Several contingency plans have also been developed including the national drought and flood operational plans. Through implementation of these plans, the SA National Department of Health for instance, ensured timely response to those needing emergency care for life threatening conditions as well as continued chronic care for victims of the recent flood disasters in the country. In addition, through effective management plans, health access to displaced victims was significantly improved through the national coordination with lead government departments such as the South African National Defence Force and Department of Public Works.

The Government has put measures in place to support communities affected by disasters through disaster relief and recovery grant funding to address immediate needs as well as long-term intervention measures to enable proper planning and “building-back better.” R3.2 billion has thus far been allocated for drought and flood damages in various provinces. R65 million was also made available to implement DRR measures within the agricultural sector.

SA is committed to accelerating the implementation of risk informed sustainable development through focused and inclusive programmes across the spheres of government to ensure that we “leave no one behind.” Accordingly, the GP will provide impetus to our ongoing national efforts to entrench disaster risk reduction within our national development agenda.

In conclusion, the South African delegation is delighted to be part of the discussions at this global platform and undertakes to continue to contribute to the advancement of the 2019GP theme: “*Resilience dividend: towards sustainable and inclusive societies*” across the globe.

I thank you