

Opening Speech

V. V. Khrapunov

Minister for Emergency Situations of the Republic of Kazakhstan

**Dear participants and guests of the conference,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

On behalf of the Ministry for Emergency Situations of the Republic of Kazakhstan, please let me heartily welcome the participants of **Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction 2007**, which must symbolize the new stage in the further development of strategic approaches towards the solution of the disaster hazard issues at the global, regional and national levels.

The initiative to hold the Conference in our country was supported by the Kazakh side after the official statement of the Chairman of Asian Disaster Reduction Center, Mr. S. Itoh addressed to the Prime-Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan in 2006. This recognized international organization, of which Kazakhstan has been a member since 1999, coordinates the activity for the prevention of disasters in Asia and provides assistance to cooperation between the countries in the region. Representatives of our country take active part in the activities carried out by the ADRC.

It is necessary to note that the safe activity issues in the whole world become more acute. Threats of the 21st century can include the large-scale disasters, accidents and catastrophes accompanied with the large number of victims and causing significant damage to the ecological and economical safety of the countries, especially in Asia.

In this regard, the objective of Kazakhstan is assistance to the countries in the Asian region for the enhancement of the national potential for being prepared against the disasters in accordance with Hyogo Framework for Action for 2005-2015 adopted at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in 2005 in Japan, as well as the review of the achievements in this area at the national and regional level. This Hyogo Framework for Action is determined as a strategic document for the community in this crucial direction.

The conference will be under my chairmanship and co-chairmanship of the Senior Deputy-Minister for disaster control of the Japanese Government, Mr. K. Hirasawa.

Co-organizers of the Conference are the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (hereinafter – UN/ISDR), Asian Disaster Reduction Center (hereinafter – ADRC), The Government of Japan, UN Development Program in Kazakhstan (UNDP), World Meteorological Organization (WMO).

Taking into consideration the importance of this topic, this Asian forum is of great interest – amongst the participants there will be 126 heads and experts from 36 international organizations, agencies dealing with emergency and disaster issues in Asian countries, non-governmental and scientific organizations and private companies from 31 countries.

This international event important for the Asian region is held in Kazakhstan and in Central Asia in whole for the first time.

Representative of the Administration of the President and Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan also take part in the work of this rather important for Kazakhstan international event.

The Prime-Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Mr. Karim Kazhimkanovich Masimov has expressed his greetings and good wishes to the participants of the Conference. The head of the Government of Kazakhstan has expressed certainty that the conference will become the next large step in order to strengthen the cooperation of the countries in the Asian region on the issues of the protection of our people from large disasters and that it will make a positive push for the development of specific recommendations in this crucial area.

Dear ladies and gentlemen, I am sure that the Asian forum will have the working, constructive and friendly atmosphere. As a result of our work we must work out the specific joint actions for the effective management and disaster reduction, for consolidation of the cooperation during the support provision for liquidation of the disaster consequences.

The President of our country stated that our internal and external security will be built upon the strong preventive measures against the national security threats, which include the natural and man-caused emergencies.

Further positive integration of our countries in the sphere of the disaster prevention and liquidation, implementation of practical interaction measures on these complex issues must become the key to safety and stability not only in our region, but in the whole world.