



ADRC Highlights

Asian Disaster Reduction Center Monthly News

Vol. 346
January
2022

TOPICS

New Year Greetings from ADRC

HAMADA Masanori,
Chairman, Asian Disaster
Reduction Center

Promoting Cooperation with Member Countries

Asian Conference on
Disaster Reduction
(ACDR) 2021

Recent Natural Disasters in Asia

Volcanic Eruption and
Tsunami in Tonga

Asian Disaster Reduction Center

Higashikan 5F, 1-5-2
Wakinohamakaigan-dori,
Chuo-ku, Kobe
651-0073 Japan

Tel: 078-262-5540
Fax: 078-262-5546
editor@adrc.asia
<https://www.adrc.asia>

© ADRC 2022

New Year Greetings from ADRC

ADRC is pleased to send New Year greetings to all our member country governments, stakeholders, and supporters. We are deeply grateful to you for all your disaster risk reduction activities over the past year, and your robust support for the recent Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction (ACDR) 2021. We wish you all a very healthy and joyous 2022!

Since the novel coronavirus was first detected in December 2019, successive waves of infection have affected people all over the globe. By the end of 2021, this virus had infected as many as 295 million people, and had resulted in 5.4 million deaths. While vaccines have made it possible to control the spread of the virus to

some degree, there is still no end in sight to the pandemic. Vaccine access varies by region, and many people are still suffering as a result of the spread of the virus.

Given this, ACDR 2021 was once again held in an online format. At this recent conference, which was held for three days starting 14 December 2021, participants gave reports and held robust discussions on topics including information sharing and disaster risk reduction, human resource development in the field of disaster management, and efforts to strengthen cooperative structures between member countries and their stakeholders. The conference provided information that is sure to prove highly valuable in the creation and implementation of disaster risk reduction policies in the member countries.

In addition to disasters like earthquakes and tsunamis, other climate related disasters, like heavy rains, major storms, and droughts, are also occurring with increasing frequency. These trends are especially pronounced in the Asian region. Because these disasters cause compounded damage when combined with the pandemic, people all around the world may be entering a time that will be more challenging than ever before.

At ADRC, we are firmly committed to doing everything we can, in close cooperation with our 31 member countries, to overcome the crisis of the coronavirus pandemic, to reduce the damage caused by major disasters like earthquakes and tsunamis, and to help people all over the world live their lives in safety and peace. We look forward to your ongoing support for and partnership in this critical work.



HAMADA Masanori
Chairman
Asian Disaster Reduction Center

● Promoting Cooperation with Member Countries

Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction (ACDR) 2021

The Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction (ACDR) 2021 was held on 14-16 December 2021, once again in an online format. Recognizing the "new normal" that has been brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, we acknowledged that disaster risk reduction systems must be adapted to the situation to build a more resilient society, and settled on a fitting theme for this year: "Time for Change and Transformation: The Road to a Resilient Asia." ACDR2021 provided a forum for the discussion of policies, programs, projects, activities, and approaches that can facilitate change and transformation towards a more resilient Asia. ACDR2021 included keynote speeches, a high-level round table, thematic sessions, and side events.

At the opening, Mr NINOYU Satoshi, Minister of State for Disaster Management of Japan stressed that DRR actions, such as investing in mitigation and awareness raising efforts, are essential to achieve transformations that lead to greater resilience. Next, Mr Rustam Nazarzoda, Chairman of the Committee of Emergency Situations and Civil Defense of Tajikistan, emphasized the role of knowledge sharing and other forms of regional cooperation in addressing recent DRR issues. Finally, Prof HAMADA Masanori, Chairman of the Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC), explained how the ACDR itself is a forum for facilitating DRR actions that can lead to improved resiliency.



14 December: Opening Remarks

The keynote speeches reflected the differing perspectives of the speakers' organizations, a UN agency, the national government, and the private sector, respectively.

First, Ms Mami Mizutori, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General (SRSG) for Disaster Risk Reduction, Head of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), encouraged participants to accelerate the beneficial and fruitful promotion of disaster resilience in the Asia-Pacific region in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. Second, Dr Basuki Hadimuljono, Minister for Public Works and Housing (PU) of Indonesia, pointed out that in hazard-prone countries like Indonesia, national governments will always be confronted with challenges in DRR. He also noted that there are existing strategies that can help address those challenges, such as DRR investments, a build back better approach to recovery, pre-disaster investments, early warning systems, and cooperation in promoting resilient infrastructure.

Finally, Ms Sandra Wu Wen-Hsiu, Chairperson and CEO of Kokusai Kogyo Co., Ltd., made the case for the private sector's role in DRR, emphasizing the sector's rich experience, skills, and resources.



14 December: Keynote Speech)

Taking advantage of the online format of the conference, ADRC invited ministers and other distinguished officials from its member countries to make statements at the high-level round table on DRR policies, institutional arrangements, programs, and activities.

Continued

The high-level officials who delivered those statements included: Mr Rustam Nazarzoda, Chairman, Committee of Emergency Situations and Civil Defense (Tajikistan), Assistant Commissioner Yazid Abdullah, Director, Volunteer and Community Partnership Department, Singapore Civil Defense Force (Singapore), Mr Md Mohsin, Secretary, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (Bangladesh), Prof Dr Syamsul Maarif, Chairman (Former Head of BNPB), Indonesia Center for Research and Training on Disaster Management (Indonesia), MG G Ariunbuyan, Chief, National Emergency Management Agency (Mongolia), Mr Muhamad Idrees, Member (DRR), National Disaster Management Authority (Pakistan), Secretary Delfin N. Lorenzana, Chairperson of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (Philippines), Major General Sudantha Ranasinghe, Director General, Disaster Management Centre (Sri Lanka), Mr Boontham Lertsukekasem, Director-General, Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, Ministry of Interior (Thailand), and Mr Pham Duc Luan, Deputy Director General, Viet Nam Disaster Management Authority (Viet Nam).

Experiences from these countries indicate a need for greater emphasis on the following activities: (1) investing in DRR and climate change adaptation, (2) applying multi-hazard early warning systems, (3) promoting all-of-society, inclusive, and proactive DRR approaches to ensure that no one is left behind, (4) enhancing capacity building in DRR, and (5) promoting disaster-resilient infrastructure.



14 December: High-Level Round Table

The next issue of ADRC Highlights will feature articles on Sessions 1-3 held on 15 and 16 December 2021.

● Recent Natural Disasters in Asia

Volcanic Eruption and Tsunami in Tonga

On 15 January 2022, the underwater volcano Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai, located 64 km north of the main island of Tonga erupted (GLIDE No. VO-2022-000005-TON), producing volcanic ash and a tsunami that caused serious damage in the country. Other Asia-Pacific countries were also impacted by the tsunami that was triggered by the eruption. Tonga is experiencing a lack of drinking water due to contamination by volcanic ash.

ADRC, as the secretariat of Sentinel Asia, requested an emergency satellite observation after the disaster to obtain the latest information on the situation and to learn more about the damage caused by the disaster.

For details, please visit: https://www.adrc.asia/publications/disaster_report/index.php or https://www.adrc.asia/publications/disaster_report/pdf/2022/Eruption_of_the_Hunga_Tonga-Hunga_Haapai_01.pdf

For Inquiries & Subscription Information

For more information or details regarding email subscriptions to this newsletter, please email editor@adrc.asia.