

# 1. Brief Description of the Asian Disaster Reduction Center

## 1-1 The background of the Establishment

### 1) International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR)

In 1987, a resolution was adopted at the United Nations General Assembly to substantially reduce damage from natural disasters by designating the 1990s as the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction.

### 2) World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction

Held in Yokohama, Japan in 1994. Adopted the "Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World," which underscores the importance of cooperation in disaster-reduction among regions which share similar types of disasters and disaster-reduction measures.

### 3) The ministerial-level Asian Natural Disaster Reduction Conference

Held in Kobe, Japan in 1995 with 28 countries from Asia and other regions attending. Adopted the Kobe Declaration on Natural Disaster Reduction, which includes an agreement to consider the creation of a system which has the functions of a disaster-reduction center for the Asian region.

### 4) Asian Natural Disaster Reduction Experts Meeting

Held in Tokyo, Japan in 1996 with 30 countries attending to discuss the creation of the system advocated in the Kobe Declaration. The countries agreed to give consideration to the establishment of an "Asian Region Disaster-Reduction Center (provisional name)."

### 5) Asian Disaster Reduction Cooperation Promotion Meeting

Held in Tokyo, Japan in 1997 with 23 countries attending. It was proposed that the Asian Disaster Reduction Center be located in Japan, that the Center should be an organization established with the agreement of participating countries, and that the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) be allowed to participate at the Center as an observer.

### 6) The Establishment of ADRC

After a series of deliberations between the Japanese Government and countries involved concerning the organization of the Center and the financial issues in relation to setting up and running such a center, the Center was established in Kobe City, Hyogo Prefecture, Japan in July 1998, with generous support of the prefectural government.

## 1-2 Organization and Status

The Asian Disaster Reduction Center consists of 22 member countries, four advisory countries and one observer. (See Table 2-1-1, 2-1-2 and 2-1-3 for details)

The Center is affiliated to the Urban Disaster Research Institute, which is supervised by the National Land Agency of Japan.

## 1-3 Activities and Policy

For the purpose of sharing information on natural disasters and disaster reduction in the Asian region, activities in the following five categories were agreed upon at past international conferences:

- \* Accumulation and provision of information on natural disasters and disaster reduction;
- \* Studies on the promotion of disaster reduction cooperation;
- \* Gathering of information on emergency relief during times of disaster;
- \* Developing of materials for dissemination of knowledge and raising disaster reduction awareness; and
- \* Promoting projects for collecting and disseminating information on disaster reduction in the Asian region.

After the Center was set up, the basic operational policies for the first three years were laid down as follows:

(1) To systematically accumulate, put into a database and disseminate information on the following:

- \* Disasters themselves;
- \* Disaster management;
- \* Disaster awareness, education and training;
- \* Disaster management technology; and
- \* Disaster management experts.

(2) To develop a disaster information network and to accumulate and disseminate information through the Internet

(3) To meet with counterparts of member and advisory countries and an observer on a regular basis to foster friendly relations

(4) To invite researchers from member countries every year

(5) To adopt English as its official language

In developing information gathering, priority will be given to those concerning information on disasters themselves, disaster management and human resources, while making continued efforts to develop those for gathering information on disaster awareness, education, training and management technology.