



Welcome Remarks

Prof. Krasae Chanawongse
Chairman, ADPC Foundation

DAY 1: (Wednesday), 20 April 2016

Duration: 10 Minutes (09:30-09:40)

Note:

- *This is the first speech of the inaugural session after the Chief Guest and other Guests take their seat.*
- *The Master of Ceremony (MC) will call the name of Prof. Krasae Chanawongse with a brief introduction and request him for his speech.*

- *His Excellency Anupong Paojinda, Minister, Ministry of Interior*
- *His Excellency Dr. Pichet Durongkaveroj, Minister, Ministry of Science and Technology*
- *His Excellency Mr. Philip Calvert, Canadian Ambassador in Thailand*
- *His Excellency Mr. Peter Prügel, German Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary in Thailand*
- *High level Government officials,*
- *Representatives from the private sector, international organizations and non-governmental organizations*

1. On behalf of the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) and the co-organising partners i.e., ADB, GIZ, GDPC and Asia Foundation, I welcome you all for this important event.
2. Suitably titled as the **Asian Business Forum on Risk Reduction and Resilience Building**, this two-day forum is about disaster resilience within the private sector, and to identify current opportunities and challenges in enhancing disaster and climate resilience. A resilient Business is good for themselves, good for the country, region and the world.
3. This is also a good opportunity to approach disaster resilience from a new point of view: **the perspective of small businesses, which are the engine of the economy in terms of employment, income generation and social cohesion.**
4. The engagement of Private Sector in Disaster and Climate Risk Management is not an **Option** but a **Necessity**. The recent disasters, particularly the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, followed by the unprecedented flooding in Thailand gave us a wakeup calls that profitability and growth of private sector can be seriously affected by both moderate hazards and major catastrophes

5. The impact of disasters caused by such natural hazards is increasing in Asia as climate change brings more extreme weather events and causes sea levels to rise. While Government is committed to secure and safeguard the citizen and its assets
6. The private sector has rarely been addressed by governments or private sector organizations as a target group for disaster resilience. Yet the private sector plays a key role in national economic wellbeing and is also pivotal for post-disaster economic recovery in guaranteeing income and employment. While all private sector entities are affected, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are particularly vulnerable to disasters due to a lack of investment by them in disaster risk management.
7. Preparing for future disasters requires appropriate legislation, incentive, awareness generation and capacity building of private sector, especially small and medium enterprises (SME) to enhance disaster resilience by investing in disaster risk reduction. The Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) has been supporting the Royal Thai Government through the Office of Small and Medium Enterprises (OSMEP), and the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (DDPM), Ministry of Interior to improve SME resilience to disasters through consultation workshop, BCP trainings and Policy dialogue.
8. This forum, being jointly organized by ADPC, ADB, GIZ, GDPC and Asia Foundation is a great opportunity to exchange knowledge, experiences and best practices on *private sector engagement in disaster risk reduction*. This will help the private sector, including SMEs, as well as governments and development partners, to translate the global and regional commitments into practical ways to strengthen business resilience and ultimately build safe and resilient communities.
9. The collaboration between the private sector, government and development partners is crucial to enhance the capacities of the private sector in building business resilience. I am happy to see so many participants from private sector in the forum.
10. I am personally looking forward to learn from your experiences and collaborative opportunities that we may foster during these two days.