



General Assembly

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Official Records

President: Mr. Kőrösi (Hungary)

In the absence of the President, Mrs. Narváez Ojeda (Chile), Vice-President, took the Chair.

A/77/PV.71), the Alliance of Small Island States and the Group of 77 and China.

The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

High-level meeting on the midterm review of the Sendai Framework

Agenda item 18 (continued)

Sustainable development

(c) Disaster risk reduction

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to remind delegations that, as mentioned in the letter dated 11 May from the President of the General Assembly, statements will be limited to three minutes for individual delegations and five minutes for statements made on behalf of a group of States.

I now give the floor to the Minister for Environment, Lands and Agricultural Development of Kiribati.

Mr. Tekaiara (Kiribati): I extend to all delegations the warmest greetings from the Government and the people of Kiribati, on whose behalf I address the meeting. At the outset I wish to add my voice to earlier speakers in thanking the facilitators and organizers of this meeting for bringing us together to carry out a review of the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030.

Before proceeding to deliver my national statement, I wish to align myself with the statements made and to be made on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum (see

It is disheartening to note that the midterm review shows that the Framework has fallen far behind schedule. It is therefore imperative that we do all we can within the next seven years to accelerate action to ensure that the Framework achieves its mission by the end of 2030.

Despite the lack of progress, which is attributable to lack of capacity and resources and is further compounded by climate change and coronavirus-disease-related challenges, Kiribati was nonetheless determined and committed to play its part. My country was able to make some headway thanks to the kind and generous support and assistance of development partners and the many like-minded stakeholders. The Kiribati Parliament enacted the Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Act, which requires all persons and organizations to engage in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation actions and responsibilities. The principle of building back better is incorporated in all actions and responsibilities for climate resilience and disaster response. In 2019, the Kiribati Joint Implementation Plan for Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management 2019–2028 was established and serves as the national disaster risk reduction strategy. To ensure that we deliver meaningful impacts, we adopted a coordinated approach through the establishment of a Department of Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management at the Office of Te Beretitenti in 2022, instead of two separate divisions working in silos, to address disaster risk management and climate change

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adaptation. The Kiribati Experts Group on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management Technical Advisory Working Committee was also regularized as the principal body for coordinating national climate change and disaster risk management programmes and initiatives across Government sectors, local governments, non-governmental organizations, churches, the private sector and communities.

Our Government cannot do this alone, and we partner with our local authorities in recognition of their critical role in disaster risk reduction. We have established 23 island disaster committees and task forces in the scattered islands of Kiribati, with an inclusive membership. We took that important step in order to strengthen Government efforts to improve disaster risk management and climate change support and assistance to communities at the subnational level in a coordinated, effective and timely manner. The realization of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction is critically dependent on an accessible, authoritative and actionable end-to-end multi-hazard early-warning system. The Government, with the support of development partners, is currently investing in upgrading and expanding weather, climate and ocean monitoring stations throughout the nation and in strengthening the national meteorological services forecasting capacity. The provision of timely and reliable impact-based forecasting services to our vulnerable communities is a critical aspect of disaster preparedness. In terms of emergency management, Kiribati launched its strategic road map for emergency management in 2021. In line with our inclusiveness commitments, we also launched the women's resilience to disasters programme, which is implemented by UN-Women and the Ministry for Women, Youth, Sport and Social Affairs, with broad coverage of activities, in order to ensure the participation, protection and inclusion of women and girls in disaster preparedness, response and recovery planning and approach.

Kiribati, as a coastal and ocean nation, has also experienced severe coastal erosion and disruptions to coastal and marine resources due to the global climate change impacts of rising sea temperatures and sea levels. There will be more losses to our coastal shorelines, depletion of marine and ocean resources, damage to coastal infrastructure and buildings, and recurring reconstruction and maintenance of seawalls. Such climate change impacts exert immense pressure on the fragile environment and already stretched

resources. Although some progress has been made in the implementation of the Sendai Framework, it is far from where we should be — halfway to our goalpost. We must do more individually and collectively to advance towards the desired goals and targets of the Sendai Framework for the good of all.

Let me conclude by wishing delegations all the best in their various roles in delivering the vision of the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction. I wish delegations productive and consensus-based deliberations, and an outcome that will be remembered for its compassion and honesty, in both language and intentions. I do this with our Kiribati traditional blessing of *Te Mauri* — health — *Te Raoi* — peace — and *ao Te Tabomoa* — prosperity.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister of India.

Mr. Mishra (India): In India, we accord high importance to disaster risk reduction issues — it is a central public policy issue. We have significantly increased the funding earmarked for disaster risk reduction. We have brought about landmark changes in our financing architecture in order to support the entire spectrum of disaster risk management needs — disaster risk mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery and reconstruction. Our State and local Governments have access to approximately \$6 billion for disaster risk mitigation over the five-year period of 2021–2025. That is in addition to resources amounting to \$23 billion meant for preparedness, response and recovery.

In just over a decade, we have been able to reduce the loss of lives from cyclones to less than 2 per cent. We are now developing ambitious mitigation programmes to reduce the risk of losses from all hazards — landslides, glacial lake outburst floods, earthquakes, forest fires, heat waves and lightning. We are working assiduously to improve access to early-warning systems. We are implementing the common alerting protocol, which will integrate alert-generating agencies with disaster managers and telecom service providers. That will ensure the dissemination of geotargeted alerts in regional languages to reach each one of the 1.3 billion citizens of our country. We applaud the Secretary-General's Early Warnings for All by 2027 initiative. Our efforts will contribute to achieving the target set by that timely global initiative.

Under India's presidency, the members of the Group of 20 (G-20) have agreed to establish a Working Group on Disaster Risk Reduction. The five priorities identified by the G-20 Working Group — early warning for all, resilient infrastructure, improved financing of disaster risk reduction, systems and capacities for response and “build back better”, and ecosystem-based approaches to disaster risk reduction — will provide added impetus to the achievement of Sendai Framework targets globally. In addition, the Coalition for Disaster-Resilient Infrastructure, which is currently co-led by India and the United States, is bringing about transformation in the way we plan, design, build and maintain infrastructure systems in the twenty-first century. Infrastructure projects are long-term investments. If informed by solid risk assessments and underpinned by good risk governance, those infrastructure investments can build long-term resilience.

This morning (see A/77/PV.71), we heard a moving account by a survivor of the recent tragic earthquake in Türkiye. In that regard and in a spirit that sees the world as one large, interconnected family, the Government of India extended immediate help to our brothers and sisters from Türkiye and Syria by dispatching field hospitals and search-and-rescue teams, as well as medical relief material. That is a true testament to a human-centric global development approach.

In conclusion, we stand ready to join efforts to reduce disaster risks at home, as well as everywhere on the planet, in the spirit of the Sustainable Development Goals — leave no one behind, leave no place behind and leave no ecosystem behind. I reiterate that we stand ready to join the efforts to reduce disaster risks at home, as well as everywhere on the planet, and I repeat, in the spirit of the Sustainable Development Goals — leave no one behind, leave no place behind and leave no ecosystem behind.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on the Minister for Internal Affairs of Seychelles.

Mr. Fonseka (Seychelles): I am pleased to attend this high-level meeting for the midterm review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) for its continuous support provided under the regional project entitled Resilience Building and Disaster Response Management in the Indian Ocean. I would like to thank partners such as UNDRR, the

Indian Ocean Commission, the European Union and the Indian Ocean Regional Intervention Platform. I wish to thank Mauritius, the Comoros and Madagascar for having committed to the HydroMet project along with Seychelles. The project, alongside the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System communications network, will enhance the safety of mariners and aviators in terms of search-and-rescue responses in the Indian Ocean and will help in regional coordination, especially in disaster management.

In the furtherance of disaster risk reduction, we are grateful to UNDRR for facilitating disaster risk management information collection through the provision of a United Nations volunteer-specialist who will assist the country with the DesInventar platform, which will commence in September 2023. That will help in making evidence-based decisions towards resilience and preparedness implementation programmes. Seychelles would like to inform members that, along with other countries, it also has completed its Sendai Framework midterm review report.

At this point, I wish to highlight the varied threats that the small island developing States (SIDS) face. It is sometimes assumed that SIDS are threatened only by the natural disasters that we know of and recognize from past incidents. That point was made by the Honourable Minister from Barbados yesterday, when he used the example that ash from volcanos did not constitute a disaster as it did not feature in “the accepted library of qualifying disasters”. There are other examples of non-traditional security threats, especially in the Indian Ocean. I will cite those shortly, but for now I wish to suggest that in responding to disasters, which usually come without warning, flexibility and adaptability should be principles that feature in the allocation of financial assistance. For example, the potential for major disasters in the Indian Ocean is very worrisome, owing to both the increased level of the world's commercial maritime traffic and the increased level of organized crime in the western Indian Ocean. Security and safety and non-traditional security issues are clear and present threats that threaten our existence. Illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing, climate change, drug smuggling and human trafficking all add to the negative impacts on our environment and our coastal livelihoods.

Seychelles, which has an exclusive economic zone of 1.3 million square kilometres, requires sound maritime domain awareness, which is a big challenge.

We are grateful for our partnership with the European Union Naval Force and the Combined Task Force 150. We take that responsibility in earnest, as a mishap would be disastrous to our coastal community and our world heritage reserves. The ability to take decisive action in responding to disasters and building resilience is vital. For example, Seychelles took decisive action to roll out an aggressive vaccination programme during the coronavirus disease pandemic and was able to vaccinate almost 90 per cent of its population by the third quarter of 2021. That allowed us to reopen our borders and reignite our economy. Yes, the nation was at the brink of a major disaster, with depleted food security and an economy that had come to a standstill. Without the instant aid of vaccines from valued partners, it would have been a catastrophe for the country, and we are grateful to our partners for the assistance provided.

I wish to draw the attention of delegations to the infrastructure that maintains the heartbeat of all SIDS, namely the unhindered functioning of our ports and airports. Some SIDS are reliant on a single main port and harbour and one main airport for international access. Seychelles has one seaport with very narrow channels that can only accommodate two cargo ships at a time and one international airport that connects to the rest of the world. Any disruption to the free flow of goods and people would bring the country to its knees. Those examples show that disasters caused by human development and political decisions and events happening in other parts of the world are as big a threat to island States as natural disasters. Ongoing conflicts in some parts of the world have directly increased the cost of maritime freight. Plastic waste collected by volunteer students on uninhabited islands is weighed in units of tonnage — and Seychelles has no manufacturing factories on its shores.

The President of Seychelles, Mr. Wavel Ramkalawan, has lobbied strongly for a multidimensional vulnerability index to be adopted without delay. We need an index that takes into consideration the intrinsic complexities that data on income, on its own, cannot fully reveal. That demands a more pragmatic methodology of assessment. We are known as small island developing States, but our problems are by no means small. In fact, we are large oceanic developing States, and perhaps the word “small” diminishes the great potential and the important role we could play in building resilience, safety and security in our regions. The issues are many and continue to grow. This is a moment that calls for

deliberate actions through building sound disaster resilience among our nations and actions to regain the initiative to address the increasing security and safety threats in our waters.

In conclusion, Seychelles welcomes the positive steps to ensure that our global community can better manage the risks that we collectively face. In the face of a more volatile climate system, all of our vulnerabilities will be exposed and exacerbated. We must not lose sight of our shared objectives.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to remind delegations, as I mentioned at the beginning of this meeting, that statements are limited to three minutes for individual delegations and five minutes for statements made on behalf of a group of States. I ask that delegations adhere to those guidelines because we have a long list of delegations inscribed on the list of speakers.

I now give the floor to the Minister for Humanitarian Action, Solidarity and National Reconciliation of the Central African Republic.

Ms. Baikoua (Central African Republic) (*spoke in French*): My delegation aligns itself with the statements to be made by the representative of Cuba on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the representative of Botswana on behalf of the least developed countries, and the representative of Nepal on behalf of the landlocked developing countries.

Allow me, on behalf of the President of the Republic, Head of State Professor Faustin Archange Touadera, who would have liked to come to New York but was prevented from doing so at the last moment, to express the gratitude of the Government and the people of the Central African Republic for this important meeting. On behalf of my delegation, I would like to thank the United Nations authorities for the warm welcome we received and all the amenities made available to us to ensure the success of this meeting in terms of organization and work. I would particularly like to thank the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) for having invited my country, the Central African Republic, to this high-level meeting, at which we will assess the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 under the theme “Working together to reduce risk for a resilient future”.

The Central African Republic, located at the centre of Africa, is a country with a tropical and

humid climate and dense vegetation. It covers an area of 623,000 square kilometres and has a population of approximately 6,000,000 inhabitants. In addition to the disasters caused by humans in various armed conflicts, the Central African Republic has not been spared the harmful effects of the climatic, geological or biological phenomena experienced by the rest of the world. Indeed, during the period 2019–2022 my country experienced major floods that affected more than half of the country's territory and more than 95,000 people, causing extensive material damage and forcing the victims to find makeshift shelters. During the same period, my country recorded 5,000 fire events and more than 8,000 road accidents. It should also be noted that the country has experienced periods of great drought, which have sometimes caused bush fires that have devastated thousands of hectares of plantations.

In response, the Government adopted in 2022 a national disaster risk reduction strategy document that strengthens existing legal mechanisms. That strategy provides for the establishment of an implementation platform that is not yet operational but will not be long in coming.

In terms of challenges, they include the volatility of the security situation, which makes it difficult to access the victims of the disasters, the limited resources, the defective road and communication networks, population growth and phenomena specific to large cities, such as buildings that are not up to code in at-risk areas.

The Central African Republic has many needs, and in order to shift from the Hyogo Framework to the Sendai Framework, \$50 million dollars will be required for the necessary programme implementation. The Central African Republic knows that it can count on the support of its usual partners, especially the UNDRR, to succeed in reducing the disaster risks. At this crucial stage in the history of my country, I do not doubt for a single moment that the international community, which has never ceased to support us, will be able to face the challenges with us.

I would be remiss to conclude my remarks without thanking the Secretary-General, who spares no effort in finding suitable ways to improve human living conditions.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Minister for Natural Resources and Climate Change of Malawi.

Mr. Usi (Malawi): At the outset, allow me to align my remarks with the statements to be delivered by the representative of Cuba on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the representative of Nepal on behalf of the least developed countries and the representative of Botswana on behalf of the landlocked developing countries. Allow me to deliver the following remarks on behalf of the Republic of Malawi.

Recurrent disasters in Malawi have had far-reaching impacts on various development sectors, such as agriculture, education, infrastructure, housing and other sectors of the country's economy. More than 25 disasters associated with severe rainfall events, such as floods and landslides, have occurred in the last decade alone, exhibiting an incremental upward tendency in terms of the number of people affected. Most recently, tropical Cyclone Freddy hit Malawi while it was facing one of the worst cholera outbreaks in recent history and high food insecurity at the peak of the lean season. More than 50,000 cholera cases and 1,700 cholera-related deaths were reported in Malawi. And although a decline in cholera cases has been observed, the situation is likely to worsen because of the impacts of tropical Cyclone Freddy. In addition, 3.8 million people were facing acute food insecurity, and Cyclone Freddy has worsened the situation.

Allow me to share some key enablers, areas of progress, successes and good practices. The Sendai Framework has broadened the task of mainstreaming disaster risk management into national frameworks that include the private sector, cultural heritage and tourism. The Government of Malawi has made significant strides by mainstreaming disaster risk management into Malawi national development plans and programmes. The Malawi 2063, a 10-year implementation plan, recognizes improved disaster risk reduction and response as one of the key outcomes of addressing adverse climate effects.

I am pleased to inform delegations that Malawi has created an enabling policy environment for disaster risk management, with strategic policy and legal instruments in place. Those successes, however, did not come without challenges. Allow me to share a few of them. The first is the limited utilization of technology with respect to disaster risk management and climate change. The second is inadequate disaster and climate financing. To address those challenges, nations and institutions — public and private — across the globe must act in solidarity through partnerships that must

be created, strengthened and consolidated for risk-informed decision-making. Further, through regional solidarity and cooperation, the Southern African Development Community has mobilized regional support. For example, we have learned also that peaceful coexistence with neighbouring countries is good for social investments. Our neighbours, Mozambique, Zambia, Tanzania and Zimbabwe, came to our rescue with prompt support during Cyclone Freddy.

In conclusion, allow me to thank the Secretary-General for leading us in calling for early warning and early action for all by 2027. Malawi commits to the implementation of that call.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Minister of Security and Civilian Protection of Mali.

Mr. Mohammedine (Mali) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like, in the name of His Excellency Colonel Assimi Goïta, President of the Transition and Head of State of the Republic of Mali, to extend my warm congratulations to the President of the General Assembly. I also voice my wishes for a successful midterm review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030.

Mali welcomes the adoption by consensus of the political declaration of the midterm review of the Sendai Framework (resolution 77/289). Disaster risk reduction remains a priority for the Government of Mali, because disasters pose a real threat to human security, sustainable development and the environment. Mali began to record disasters from 1904, in particular those caused by periods of droughts, heat waves, epidemics and floods. Those disasters have caused enormous loss of life, material damage and damage to the environment, sometimes without assessment. To address those challenges, the Government of Mali agreed in Japan in 2015 to the midterm review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. My country therefore set up the first national platform for disaster risk reduction. That grouping of State structures and its partners made it possible to lay the foundations for disaster risk reduction in Mali, starting in 2006.

To follow up the priorities of the Hyogo and Sendai Frameworks, the Government of Mali has worked, as a first priority, to establish training programmes and an early-warning system. In addition, Mali has adopted legislative and regulatory texts in that area. For the

second priority, the Government of Mali created a national platform for disaster risk reduction, a national centre for emergency operations and a laboratory for analysis and research in disaster risk reduction. Similarly, Mali put in place a national disaster risk reduction strategy and an interministerial crisis management committee. Turning to the third priority, Mali subscribed to the African Risk Capacity for drought protection. Finally, with regard to the fourth priority, Mali adopted an emergency organization plan, and has developed and continuously reviewed a national multi-risk contingency plan. Similarly, my country developed a telephone application dedicated to early warning and set up an information and awareness campaign for the population.

Those results were obtained thanks to the commitment of the highest authorities in Mali and the support of our partners through jointly implemented projects and programmes. However, it must be recognized that enormous challenges remain for the achievement of all seven goals and targets of the Sendai Framework. Those challenges include public safety, the strengthening of multi-hazard early-warning systems, the establishment of subregional bodies, the strengthening of meteorological and hydrological structures, and support for the urbanization of cities and countryside through the construction of roads, sea walls, bridges, dams, etc. In view of the challenges that I have just mentioned, Mali considers it important to continue implementing the Sendai Framework in order to strengthen the resilience of developing countries in the face of crises and disasters in the context of climate change and its harmful consequences for our populations and our environment.

In conclusion, the Government of Mali, through me, renews its commitment to continue efforts in the implementation of the Sendai Framework for the benefit of our populations. In that regard, we ask for the support of our partners both in prevention and in preparation, as well as for mitigation and recovery in the event of major incidents, while urging them to respect the three principles guiding public action in Mali, as defined by His Excellency Colonel Assimi Goïta, President of the Transition and Head of State — namely, respect for sovereignty, respect for strategic choices and partnerships, taking into account the interests of the Malian people in decision-making. I thank our development partners, in particular the United Nations agencies and the Bretton Woods institutions, for the

support provided, and we encourage them to continue their efforts with a view to achieving the objectives of the Sendai Framework.

I will conclude by paying a vibrant tribute to the victims of crises and disasters around the world in general and those of Mali in particular.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Minister for Tourism, Civil Aviation, Sustainable Development and Culture of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

Mr. James (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines): We align ourselves with the statement made on behalf of the Caribbean Community (see A/77/PV.71).

My country, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, has faced a vivid demonstration over the past few years of the perilous fragility of hard-won developmental gains, particularly for small island developing States (SIDS). Against the backdrop of our constant vulnerability to climate change, the onset of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic was a force multiplier, and was followed by cascading hazards, including volcanic eruptions in 2021, floods and hurricane Elsa. The resultant damage of the La Soufrière volcanic eruptions alone amounted to some 26 per cent of our gross domestic product. We are therefore keenly aware that sustainable development is impossible without aggressive action to bolster resilience, adaptation and environmental protection.

Recognizing the critical nature of disaster risk reduction, our Government has committed significant resources across the spectrum from disaster preparedness to recovery, thereby strengthening our management of disaster risk reduction programmes while exponentially increasing investments in all aspects of resilience. The progress made can be traced to the expansion of our national emergency management office and the implementation of a comprehensive disaster management policy in collaboration with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency, our regional disaster response body, which — we wish to underscore — requires more support. In addition, in the light of the increasing frequency and intensity of weather events, we created a contingencies fund financed by a climate resilience levy. That fund provides for immediate post-disaster financing, while maintaining a degree of macroeconomic stability. It was instrumental in our COVID-19 pandemic response and following the volcanic eruptions, and was a necessity

while international response was being mobilized. On the heels of our own experience in managing the complexities of a multi-hazard environment, we therefore welcome the Secretary-General's Early Warning for All initiative.

Notwithstanding the initiatives I have mentioned, there are many areas in which progress still needs to be made if we are to deliver on the Sendai targets. In particular, financing remains an ongoing challenge in preventing new and reducing existing risks. Priority must therefore be given to addressing the financing gaps and to mechanisms to provide support and resources for early preparedness. The scaling up of disaster risk financing is essential and is inextricably linked to the broader conversation on the needed reform of international development financing. Specific consideration of the special vulnerabilities of SIDS should remain high on the agenda. In my country, the livelihoods and survival of our citizens depend on the decisions taken in these forums, far beyond our borders.

In conclusion, this midterm review highlights the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the pace of implementation. It must therefore recommend measures for acceleration and additional support for SIDS, such as technology transfer and capacity-building. As we approach the Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States, it will be imperative that disaster risk reduction be integrated into the successor framework to the Samoa Pathway. We must ensure better alignment of those frameworks with climate change adaptation in order to effectively reduce risk and build resilience. My country remains committed to pursuing partnerships at all levels in order to tackle our greatest challenges and transform the way we address our shared agenda. We must act together. We must act now.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Minister for Home Affairs of Brunei Darussalam.

Mr. Rahman (Brunei Darussalam): I am honoured to address today's meeting and wish to extend our gratitude to the United Nations for convening the important milestone — the midterm review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030.

Brunei Darussalam is committed to building disaster resilience in the light of the unprecedented challenges posed by the coronavirus disease pandemic and climate

change. We also believe that disaster risk reduction is a critical component of sustainable development, and that effective disaster risk management and governance can contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the Sendai Framework.

Our country is also prone to natural disasters, such as flooding, landslides and strong winds, and we recognize the need to take proactive measures to mitigate the impacts of those events. In response to the international framework on disaster risk reduction, we have made significant progress through the development of national policies and plans, such as through our national climate change policy and the development of the disaster management strategic policy framework, which provides a framework for a more coordinated approach across different sectors and stakeholders, and ensures that climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction and resilience-building are integrated and synergized in development planning. Mitigation projects have also been carried out intensively to ensure that our community's vulnerability to disasters is reduced and that communities can maintain their livelihoods with minimal disruption. Furthermore, the Government has institutionalized its national disaster management capacities, spearheaded by the National Disaster Council, composed of various Government agencies and responding agencies, which oversee policy and strategic direction in ensuring that national disaster risk reduction efforts are implemented nationwide, in line with the objectives of the Sendai Framework.

We underscore the need to enhance regional and international cooperation in disaster risk reduction, particularly with respect to transboundary risks and hazards. The launch of the Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration on the Strategic and Holistic Initiative to Link Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Responses to Emergencies and Disasters will enable us to collectively respond to the different types of emergencies and disasters in the region in a rapid, effective and timely manner. As part of our commitment and support to help our fellow members of the ASEAN communities, we have and are always ready to mobilize officers to ASEAN emergency response assessment teams for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief efforts. Therefore, we align ourselves with the ASEAN joint statement and the implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response, and will continue to uphold the Sendai Framework.

We reaffirm our commitment to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 and to building disaster resilience at the national and regional levels. We recognize the importance of the midterm review — it is an opportunity to assess our progress and identify areas for improvement. We also look forward to working together with our partners in this important endeavour and remain confident that we will be able to achieve the targets and goals set out in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Minister for Economic Prospects and International Partnership of Chad.

Mr. Batraki (Chad) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for organizing this high-level meeting. With that in mind, Chad is pleased to participate in these meetings devoted to the midterm review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, which was adopted in 2015.

Disasters are devastating phenomena, and disaster risk reduction is a complex and multidimensional issue. No individual State can prepare for them alone. Disaster risk reduction therefore requires coordination and synergistic actions that are based on the development of strategic and institutional State frameworks and the mobilization of resources, both human and financial.

Chad is eager to reduce disaster risks through the implementation of the Sendai Framework and has worked, with the support of partners, to develop important planning tools, strengthen the institutional framework and set up or adhere to emergency preparedness and response mechanisms, including the organization of relief and financing. That includes a national action plan for disaster risk reduction, a national multi-risk contingency plan, a national strategy and action plan for disaster risk management, a national disaster relief organization plan, and membership in the African Risk Capacity, which is a mutual insurance company for African States to strengthen investment capacities in that area in the event of a crisis. Those national policy documents are supported at the provincial level by provincial and communal contingency plans for N'Djamena, the capital. Disaster risk governance has contributed to raising people's awareness of their vulnerability.

Given that investments in the field of disaster risk reduction contribute to preventing the serious

consequences of disasters in terms of loss of human life and economic losses, the Government has taken disaster risk reduction into account in the State's national budget. With a view to accelerating the implementation of the Sendai Framework in Chad, the Government has undertaken several decisive actions, the most important of which are the establishment of a committee of parliamentarians for disaster risk reduction, the strengthening of the role of the private sector and civil society in the field of disaster risk reduction, and the creation of a national disaster risk reduction fund.

However, the Government's commitment and sustained efforts in the area of disaster risk reduction face many constraints. Indeed, Chad, which is a landlocked country, devotes more than 20 per cent of its budget to defence and security efforts in the fight against terrorism in the Lake Chad Basin and the Sahel. It currently hosts more than 600,000 refugees on its territory, not to mention the new influx of people from the Sudan, and has experienced the negative effects of climate change, in particular the floods that my country experienced last year.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm the will and commitment of Chad and its Government to accelerate the effective implementation of Sendai Framework priorities. Chad calls on all States to show greater commitment and solidarity in order to achieve the expected results.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Chair of the National Safety Authority of Libya.

Mr. Almalīqitah (Libya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, we would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for organizing this very important high-level meeting on the midterm review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. It provides an excellent opportunity to evaluate the progress made in implementing the Sendai Framework ahead of 2030.

The Government of National Unity places an increasing focus on urgent topics, such as economic, political and social reform, as well as security issues, despite the challenges our country is facing. The Government has paid particular attention to promoting programmes of disaster risk management and addressing catastrophes. A decision was taken in 2023 to create a permanent Libyan committee on disaster risk

reduction. The committee is part of the National Safety Authority, which, along with its various committees, is responsible for national safety throughout the country.

My country, Libya, like other countries around the world, is suffering from the effects and repercussions of climate change. They constitute a challenge when it comes to planning and development. Examples of climate risks include rain, sand storms and acute temperature increases in summer to record levels over several weeks, causing forest fires, drought and direct damage to humans and animals. My country also faces variations in rainfall rates leading to flooding, particularly in the north of the country, as well as biological damage and environmental pollution. In response to those risks, the Government adopted a local emergency plan and an awareness-raising programme to prevent fires and limit their spread. In terms of health, my country responded to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic by creating duly equipped medical and quarantine centres under the supervision of trained Libyan medical personnel.

This high-level meeting is being held at a time when our region is experiencing large-scale political change, causing armed conflicts that have led to extensive migrations of people and seriously affected North Africa and my country. As a result of that, large concentrations of hundreds of thousands of people of different nationalities have been living in cities, thereby depleting the economic and material capabilities of the affected countries. That real challenge has been a burden for the budgets of States.

Turning to the promotion of international cooperation to combat the disaster risks and challenges that my country faces, I am proud and honoured to tell the Assembly about our participation in a research relief team of paramedics and doctors for conducting relief work and providing support to affected areas following the recent earthquake in Türkiye.

In conclusion, my country's delegation underscores the urgent need to implement the Sendai Framework as an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to adopt a sustainable development approach based on risk awareness. We clearly need to move the focus away from managing disasters and their effects towards prevention, recovery, capacity-building for response and resilience, as well as towards establishing global partnerships and international cooperation that are effective, useful and robust.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Deputy Minister for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs of South Africa, who will speak on behalf of the Group of African States.

Mr. Tau (South Africa): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of African States, which aligns its statement with the statement to be delivered by the delegation of Cuba on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Our meeting today takes place at a moment when Africa is one of the regions most affected by disasters, including the adverse effects of climate change, biodiversity loss, desertification and the implications of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. It is also estimated that 60 per cent of Africa does not have access to early-warning and climate information services, which makes the continent one of the regions most vulnerable to disasters.

In the past 20 years, climate-related disasters have almost doubled. Developing countries need an estimated \$70 billion annually for adaptation. Africa has also suffered the greatest economic impact, with losses equivalent to 12.3 per cent of its total gross domestic product in the reporting years. Official development assistance related to disaster risk reduction has, however, barely increased, with only 0.5 per cent of such assistance dedicated to disaster risk reduction in the pre-disaster phase in the period 2010–2019 — a marginal improvement over the corresponding figure of 0.4 per cent in the period 1990–2010. That financing gap must be addressed. Africa remains committed to the four priorities of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 and is exerting all efforts in understanding disaster risk, strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk, investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience, and enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to build back better in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

The commitment of Africa to disaster risk reduction goes back to 2004, when the African Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction was adopted. The aim of the Strategy is to contribute to the attainment of sustainable development and poverty eradication by facilitating the integration of disaster risk reduction into development. To enhance the implementation of the Sendai Framework, the African Union also adopted an updated operationalization matrix for the period 2021–2025 to implement the Framework in Africa.

A substantial increase in political commitment is demonstrated by the appointment of Mr. Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, President of the Republic of Mozambique, as African Union Champion for Disaster Risk Management, and the adoption of the Nairobi Declaration on accelerating the path to achieving the goals and targets of the Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in Africa. The provision of the means of implementation is crucial, now more than ever, in order to fully implement the Sendai Framework, establish the necessary coherence between disaster risk reduction and the eradication of poverty, and achieve sustainable development.

The African Group reiterates its support for the Secretary-General's initiatives to protect everyone on Earth through universal coverage of early-warning systems against extreme weather and climate change within the next five years, and invites development partners, the international financial institutions and the multilateral development banks to provide support for implementation of the Early Warnings for All initiative. In that connection, the African Group reaffirms the importance of doubling climate finance for adaptation, as well as the operationalization of the loss and damage fund, as agreed at the twenty-seventh Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt.

I shall now speak in my national capacity.

The adoption of national and international instruments to address societal risk do not guarantee that a such a decision will be implemented. The need to invest in resources that can effectively put instruments into action is critical. Political will to allocate those resources to manage and reduce disaster risk will largely determine whether societal resilience is achieved. The need to develop and foster that commitment is now needed, given the growing global risk landscape that is developing. In that regard, there is a need to further our commitments to bolster multilateralism based on the founding principles of consultation, inclusion and solidarity.

Expanding partnerships through multilateralism within regional, political and economic arrangements is critical and must be strengthened through capacity-building to mainstream disaster risk reduction, using action plans to guide implementation at the subnational level. Collaboration through those partnerships

provides opportunities to formulate common visions of the future we all want, as articulated by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other international instruments. That will enable us to set goals, pool resources, improve representation and promote the implementation of the commitments made.

South Africa has made progress in terms of implementing the Sendai Framework through various measures and is poised to learn and cooperate with other partners to share our insights. In that regard, we have made progress in developing our early-warning system with regard to severe weather in order to reflect a forecast of what the weather impacts would be. In that way, communities and response agencies are more empowered to make informed decisions on how to prepare for expected impacts by taking early action.

Lastly, the COVID-19 pandemic required that the Government improve its coordination and management systems. That enabled the Government to better deal with other weather-related national disasters that occurred during the last two years. Notwithstanding those gains, South Africa collaborated recently with India, Japan, Germany, Bangladesh and Mozambique, who shared best practices in terms of their disaster management systems with the aim of deepening the South African disaster management system. We express our gratitude to those countries for the information and practices shared.

South Africa is therefore committed to the implementation of the SDGs and other global commitments to enhance and support initiatives that promote disaster risk reduction.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Deputy Minister and Deputy Head of the National Agency for Disaster Management of Indonesia, who will speak on behalf of the Mexico, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Türkiye and Australia (MIKTA Group).

Mr. Jati (Indonesia): I would like to deliver this statement on behalf of Mexico, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, Türkiye and Australia (MIKTA).

We applaud the leadership of the President of the General Assembly in making progress on the disaster risk reduction agenda, particularly at a time when the world is facing simultaneous and multidimensional crises. We note that considerable progress has been achieved. We acknowledge that all risks are systemic

in nature, and their impacts materialize across multiple sectors and scales. Therefore, it is our view that joint efforts to break institutional and intergovernmental obstacles are necessary. We welcome the development achieved on the wider understanding of the importance of inclusive disaster risk reduction at all levels. We also welcome the significant increase in the implementation of disaster risk reduction strategies. However, the overall progress of the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 remains off track. We recognize that is due to the many interrelated risks and challenges that the world currently faces, including climate change, which has increased the frequency and severity of disasters. At the same time, emerging risks such as the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic have also undermined the progress of disaster risk reduction implementation.

More must be done. We understand that preparedness and inclusive early-warning systems are essential to ensure the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and their targets. In that regard, we would like to join in global solidarity and highlight MIKTA's commitment to supporting the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. First, with respect to preparedness for natural and human-made disasters, we renew our call for further bilateral, regional and global cooperation in the fields of disaster prevention, anticipation, preparedness and response, as well as resilience-building and emergency management, in line with the Sendai Framework and the Bali Agenda for Resilience. Secondly, with respect to the response to disasters, we are committed to supporting countries facing emergencies caused by the devastating effects of disasters. Thirdly, beyond preparedness and response, we are also committed to strengthening wider cooperation on the disaster risk reduction agenda, including through knowledge and sharing of best practices.

Allow me now to speak in my national capacity, on behalf of Indonesia.

In the period 2015–2023, the disaster management paradigm in Indonesia was successfully shifted from reactive to preventive, from response to preparedness. Our progress has been driven by political will and strong leadership, as well as by institutional and legal frameworks. Since 2015, our efforts to implement the Sendai Framework have been marked by several milestones. We have decentralized regulations for disaster risk management in order to enable local

government leadership in disaster risk reduction efforts. We have enacted a long-term disaster management plan for the period 2020–2044 in order to ensure the continuity of disaster risk reduction efforts. To ensure reliable financing, we have established a disaster pool fund at the national level.

The achievement of such milestones was hampered by various challenges, including emerging systemic and cross-border risks such as the COVID-19 pandemic. We realize that to advance disaster risk reduction efforts, we must overcome all the relevant challenges. In that regard, allow me to highlight three key principles that have guided Indonesia's endeavours in putting forward the disaster risk reduction agenda. First, we must derive maximum benefits from the advancement of science, technology and data in order to ensure risk-informed decision-making and investments. Secondly, we consistently implement a collaborative and inclusive multi-helix approach in our disaster risk reduction efforts. An inclusive and multi-helix approach highlights the vital role played by multi-stakeholders, including Government, local communities, the private sector, academia and the media, in disaster risk reduction decision-making. Thirdly, we continue to strengthen investment and financing for disaster risk reduction in order to support sustainable development achievements, including through disaster-pooling funds and disaster insurance.

Following the adoption of the political declaration of the high-level meeting on the midterm review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 (resolution 77/289), we affirm our commitment to accelerating the implementation of the Sendai Framework. Indonesia is committed to promoting sustainable resilience as an aligning approach to strengthen climate change adaptation and disaster risk management efforts towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. We also stand ready to share our experiences and collaborate with other countries in pursuing the sustainable development agenda in the region as well as globally.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Minister for Environment of Tunisia.

Ms. Chikhaoui-Mahdaoui (Tunisia) (*spoke in Arabic*): I am delighted to participate today in this important high-level meeting on the midterm review of the implementation of the Sendai Framework for

Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, on the theme “Working together to reduce risk for a resilient future”.

The countries of the world have recently experienced the ever-grave consequences of natural, technological and biological disasters, in addition to an increase in the number of deaths and colossal economic losses. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the catastrophic consequences of which are still being felt among our populations, is a perfect example of that. Reports for the period 2015–2018 on the heavy losses in the African continent due to disasters have recorded the deaths of more than 60,000 people and economic losses exceeding \$10 billion.

The Mediterranean region is one of the most vulnerable regions to climate change. Tunisia has seen several natural disasters, and we are not immune to the risks that threaten human beings, such as pollution and other challenges. My country has therefore made disaster risk reduction a top priority, both nationally and internationally. We hosted the Africa-Arab Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction in October 2018, on the theme “Towards disaster risk-informed and inclusive sustainable development”. That Platform achieved several results, the most important of which is an appeal to accelerate the implementation of the Sendai Framework and the promotion of Arab-African cooperation in the area of disaster risk reduction. We are currently preparing to convene an Arab-African forum on science and technology for the improvement of knowledge and early-warning for all, to be held in Tunisia in October.

Tunisia has developed a number of approaches and policies in the realm of disaster risk reduction, in line with the principles and guidance established in international processes, and pursuant to our priorities and national and unique local characteristics, in cooperation with donors.

First, we have implemented projects to reduce the risk of disasters in the most vulnerable regions, and we seek to include that approach in our development and urban planning priorities in the relevant sectors.

Secondly, we have adopted a national disaster risk reduction strategy, in line with the objectives, principles and guidance of the Sendai Framework, drawing on international best practice and experience. In so doing, we have taken account of the lessons learned to date.

Thirdly, we have mobilized significant financial resources to deliver a four-pronged national strategy on reducing flood risks in cities, by adopting a national strategy and implementing projects in the regions that are most exposed to flooding, providing support for weather forecasting and early-warning systems, adopting a national insurance strategy against disaster risks, and establishing governance support through a disaster risk reduction platform and a permanent resilience structure, while developing mechanisms for coordination and follow-up.

The midterm assessment report (A/77/640) states that despite the efforts undertaken, it will be difficult to achieve the objectives of the Sendai Framework by 2030. It is therefore necessary to mobilize additional financial resources, engage in international cooperation with a view to setting up and implementing national and local strategies, include disaster risk reduction in different development sectors, in particular agriculture, water resources, biological diversity and energy, adopt natural solutions, and engage in national financing mechanisms. That is particularly crucial given that the majority of those risks, such as COVID-19 and droughts, are now cross-border risks.

In conclusion, I wish to take this opportunity to underscore the importance of the Arab-African Forum on Science and Technology, which will be hosted by Tunisia in a few months. We hope to benefit from the support of the United Nations in organizing that Forum, and it can count on the participation of a number of countries and scientific research centres from the Arab and African regions with a view to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals for current and future generations.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Undersecretary for the Environment and Natural Resources of Philippines, who will speak on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Ms. Erni (Philippines): I am honoured to deliver this statement on behalf of the member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

We thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this meeting and acknowledge the support of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) in this important midterm review process.

Disaster risk reduction is an integral part of sustainable development, while the Sendai Framework

for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 is the foundation of the work of the United Nations on disaster risk reduction, as agreed to by our Heads of State and Government in 2015. We are now at the midpoint to 2030, and we can assess the gaps and progress and recommit to implementing the Sendai Framework in order to reduce risks, strengthen resilience and get back on track to achieving sustainable development for a sustainable future.

ASEAN is unfortunately one of the regions that is most vulnerable to natural hazards. Since the adoption of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response in 2008, various initiatives have been put in place, including to realize the vision of One ASEAN, One Response, and to ensure a comprehensive and robust disaster management and emergency response system to achieve the targets of the Sendai Framework. ASEAN therefore welcomes the recognition of the value of regional and subregional mechanisms in the political declaration just adopted (resolution 77/289), and in that connection wishes to commend the co-facilitators, Australia and Indonesia, for their achievements.

ASEAN would like to share three commitments in that regard.

First, to mainstream disaster risk reduction within and across all sectors, we will continue to apply a whole-of-ASEAN approach to disaster management at all levels, including by enhancing climate and disaster-resilient infrastructure, implementing nature-based and ecosystem-based approaches, and enhancing preparedness to respond to hazards and future health emergencies, in particular through the implementation of the Bangkok Principles.

Secondly, ASEAN will continue to place communities at the heart of disaster risk management and resilience-building efforts and further enhance their capacity.

Thirdly, in addition to strengthening regional cooperation, ASEAN also underscores the importance of ensuring cooperation among regional and global mechanisms, such as through the ASEAN-United Nations Joint Strategic Plan of Action on Disaster Management.

In conclusion, ASEAN remains steadfast in forging stronger partnerships and collaboration with all on this matter and looks forward to further engaging on disaster

risk reduction, including at the next Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, to be held in the Philippines in 2024.

It is now my privilege to deliver the statement of the Philippines on its commitment to the Sendai Framework.

The Philippines thanks the President of the General Assembly and UNDRR for convening this high-level meeting. We stand with the Assembly today to take stock, accelerate and possibly recalibrate our work, knowing that the commitments we make today will determine our resilience tomorrow. We recognize the intersectionality of vulnerability and how interdependencies require systemic solutions across sectors, scales and geographies.

Prior to 2020, despite multiple hazards, we had significantly reduced disaster-related mortalities, the number of affected populations and the direct economic losses to our gross domestic product. Those reductions were achieved through social services and protection, resilient infrastructure and housing, national and local coherency in risk governance, and strategic multi-stakeholder engagement. Climate change and the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, however, masked those achievements and amplified pre-existing social vulnerabilities. The majority of all loss and damage impacts between 2010 and 2020 were due to tropical cyclones alone. The COVID-19 pandemic reversed years of social progress and drove more than 3 million Filipinos back into poverty. Those complexities drive our renewed commitment to a comprehensive risk management approach and an all hazards, whole-of-society nexus approach to climate and disaster risk governance that is capable of addressing even the needs of the fragile, the displaced and the most vulnerable communities. To achieve that, from 2015 to 2022 we mainstreamed resilience strategies through convergence budgeting and planning and invested in early-warning systems for prevention and pre-disaster recovery planning.

Resilience is prioritized in our Philippine development plans and in our sustainable finance road map in order to ensure that it is everyone's business. We enable data-driven decision-making and open science through geographical information system platforms, such as GIS Philippines, and established the Philippine Space Agency. Coupled with end-to-end multi-hazard early-warning systems and impact-based forecasting, we are able to design new forms

of social protection, set engineering standards and pursue subnational risk financing. Moving forward, a national natural resources geospatial database, a water resource management office and a national virology institute are being established. We continue digital technologies for disaster risk reduction, while leveraging transdisciplinary science and local and indigenous knowledge for nature-based solutions.

The climate, the environment, biodiversity, security and human development are inextricably linked. We are all stakeholders today, but we are also shareholders in the future of the generations to come. The Philippines renews our commitment to that great responsibility today, and we urge the effective integration of the Sendai Framework with agreements on the Sustainable Development Goals, climate change, biodiversity, health, water and the new urban agenda, among other issues, even as we work for greater access to the financial and technical resources needed to implement synergized programmes.

In conclusion, we thank Australia and Indonesia for their leadership in reaching the agreement on the political declaration adopted at this high-level meeting, and we thank our ASEAN partners for advancing the goals and targets for our region. We also look forward to seeing members in Manila, as the Philippines will host the next Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2024, in the fervent hope that through our joint efforts there will be resilience for all, and that no ecosystem, community or individual will be left behind.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Secretary of State for Civil Protection of Portugal.

Ms. Gaspar (Portugal): It is an honour to address the General Assembly. The world has significantly changed since the adoption in 2015 of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. While recognizing the progress achieved, it is important to accept that we have a long way ahead and no time to lose if we are to fulfil the promise of Sendai, in line with the political declaration of the midterm review approved today by consensus (resolution 77/289). There is no 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development without Sendai.

We must act now and reshape our approach to disaster risk reduction. A safer and more sustainable future is still possible. In Portugal, we have sought to contribute in many ways. In November 2021, we hosted

the European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction, which delivered a road map for the coordinated implementation of the Sendai Framework and a ministerial declaration entitled “Prevention pledge”, which fed into the preparatory process of today’s midterm review. At the same time, we have been working to implement the priorities of the Sendai Framework at home.

Allow me to highlight three points.

First, our major concerns are forest fires, which are often linked to severe meteorological events. In 2017, Portugal lost more than 100 lives to devastating wildfires, and the best tribute to the victims is to never give up and to continue to improve our resilience. That is why we built a comprehensive fire management system, with 10-year objectives, in which the emphasis is on prevention and the resilience of our territories. As we speak, we are hosting the eighth International Wildland Fire Conference in Porto, Portugal, an event that brings together more than 1,000 experts from the four corners of the world.

Secondly, our national strategy for disaster risk reduction, which was adopted in 2017, is aligned with the Sendai Framework and the 2030 Agenda. It is based on whole-of-society and whole-of-Government approaches, promotes innovative solutions for prevention and preparedness, and brings civil protection closer to land management policies, with a financial dimension attached.

Thirdly and finally, strengthening early-warning systems, in line with the Secretary-General’s Early Warnings for All initiative, is also a key part of our work. We are working on both an upstream component of monitoring and forecasting and a downstream component related to the timely delivery of warnings to citizens at risk.

Policies for disaster risk reduction may not be appealing or popular, but they can make a difference. Together with environmental education and the engagement of local communities, they provide the basis for risk-informed decisions at all levels. International cooperation is also essential, especially with developing countries in prevention via capacity-building and in response through mutual assistance. Disasters recognize no borders. We urge all to work together to find the best solutions for those common challenges. We deserve it. Our future deserves it.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the First Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba, who will speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. Peñalver Portal (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour of delivering the following statement in explanation of position on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, upon the recommendations of the President of the General Assembly.

At the outset, the Group of 77 and China wishes to thank the President of the General Assembly for organizing this high-level meeting. The Group further thanks the co-facilitators, the Permanent Representatives of Australia and Indonesia and their respective teams for their tireless and commendable efforts to prepare the text of the political declaration (resolution 77/289). We also thank them for facilitating the intergovernmental consultations process. The Group of 77 committed to participating in a constructive manner in the negotiation of the draft text, with a view to arriving at a document that clearly reflects the current state of implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 for developing countries.

I wish to voice the specific concerns of the Group of 77 and China during the negotiations process for this document. The Group regrets that priority was given to the resolution on disaster risk reduction within the Sendai Framework that was adopted on the recommendation of the Second Committee (resolution 77/164). While that resolution is very important when it comes to addressing natural disasters and their consequences for the sustainable development agenda, the Sendai Framework is the document being reviewed here. For that reason, we must be consistent in terms of what was agreed on and approved in 2015. For example, the political declaration on the midterm review is inconsistent when it refers to the term “technology transfer”, which should be in line with the Sendai Framework term “on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed”. As a result of that inconsistency, there are many different interpretations that affect the terms adopted in the Sendai Framework. Given that the next session of the Second Committee will coincide with the adoption of the political declaration, it is important to align priorities and strategies in order to address natural disasters within the Sendai Framework during its midterm review.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes the impact of restrictive measures, as those restrictions impede the full achievement of economic and social development, in particular in developing countries. Whether in the form of earthquakes, hurricanes, droughts, floods or other disasters, many developing countries are experiencing an unprecedented increase in natural disasters. Unfortunately, it has been demonstrated that such restrictions have grave consequences for the development capacity of those countries, as well as their capacity to prepare for, and recover from, natural disasters. Despite the fact that the Group has voiced its concerns and has also participated in debates on the repercussions of unilateral coercive measures against developing countries, the Group wishes to take this opportunity to express its disappointment that the mere mention of the impact of those restrictions in the document was not accepted, given that they continue to seriously impact the development and the humanitarian situation of developing countries, especially with respect to natural disasters.

Although the correlation between climate change and disaster risk reduction is valid and cannot be denied, there are many variables that have been shown to exacerbate vulnerabilities in preparedness for, and recovery from, natural disasters, such as the lack of means of implementation, poverty, poorly developed infrastructure and conflicts, among other things. The Group is also of the view that disaster risk reduction is intrinsically linked to all aspects of climate change. That is why the political declaration should not restrict that link or focus only on aspects related to mitigation and adaptation. The Group is of the view that climate change should be addressed in a comprehensive and global manner, rather than only mentioning a few of its elements. We also need to pay particular attention to the means of implementation and to loss and damage. Bearing in mind the frequency and intensity of disasters, as well as the significant gap in financing for disasters, the Group of 77 and China would have preferred to see more robust and specific provisions geared towards the means of implementation in developing countries, in particular for least developed countries, small island developing States, land-locked developing States and African countries, as well as middle-income countries, which face specific challenges.

Given that the establishment of multi-hazard early-warning systems remains a challenge for many

developing countries, the Group of 77 and China firmly supports the Early Warnings for All initiative of the Secretary-General, which was launched at the twenty-seventh Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Although we are disappointed that the initiative was not taken up in the political declaration, we urge all relevant States to ramp up their support to that initiative as we move forward. The Group also wishes to underscore the need to address the objectives and desired results of the Sendai Framework in a holistic manner in order to address key priorities, such as the reduction of global mortality and the reduction of economic loss caused by disasters, as well as bolstering resilience on all fronts and exchanging access to knowledge, experience and best practices, in particular for the developing countries that are least able to engage in risk management.

The G-77 and China wishes to reaffirm that the Sendai Framework is a comprehensive part of sustainable development. We must not obscure the way in which we address disaster risk reduction in the future by confusing it with different humanitarian processes and initiatives.

I now have the honour of delivering the following statement in the debate of this meeting on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

This high-level meeting on the midterm review of the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction is an opportunity to identify and implement changes and innovations and to correct our course when it comes to policies, practices, investment and cooperation in order to prevent, mitigate and reduce existing and emerging risks by 2030. When disasters happen, the realities of the structural deficiencies in the economies of developing countries are exposed. The appropriate implementation of the Sendai Framework is not an isolated process. Rather, it is a fundamental part of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. For that reason, a development approach must prevail.

We must also understand that a preventive approach will truly be adopted only when efforts are geared towards addressing the root causes that limit the capacities of developing countries to respond to disasters and increase their resilience. Despite our best efforts, the Group is concerned that the economic and social repercussions, direct or indirect, of disasters have increased. However, the investments in disaster risk reduction and efforts to minimize the risk of investments

are still insufficient. In the recommendations, it is clearly stated that developing countries require a conducive international environment that encourages investment in infrastructure and developing resilience without increasing the debt burden that limits access to financing. It is essential to address the financing deficit. Developing countries require adequate, sustainable and timely support, including through funding, technology transfer and capacity-building from developed countries and their partners that is tailored to their needs and priorities, as reflected in the principles of the Sendai Framework.

The Group underscores the importance of moving from disaster management and disaster risk to a more preventive approach at all levels. The lack of accessible and high-quality data continues to seriously hinder efforts to implement the Sendai Framework and remains a challenge for effective disaster risk reduction. The data and the capacity to interpret it to make the right decisions and elaborate informed policies on risk, especially for developing countries, are crucial to ensure the effective inclusion of disaster risk reduction in various sectors. That is why the Group believes that international cooperation mechanisms must be strengthened, including through South-South cooperation and cooperation with the mechanisms and funds of the United Nations, within the framework of their respective mandates, in order to also increase substantially the availability of and access to early multi-hazard warning systems and information and assessments of disasters and risks in order to support national Governments.

We reaffirm the need to implement the Sendai Framework in the context of efforts to eradicate poverty. More specific measures must be adopted in order to address the underlying causes that increase the risks of disaster, such as inequality, climate change and climate variability, unplanned and rapid urbanization and inadequate land management, as well as such aggravating factors as demographic change, weak institutional agreements, policies established without risk assessments, a lack of regulations and incentives for private investment in disaster risk reduction, complex supply chains, limitations on the availability of technology, the unsustainable use of natural resources, the degradation of ecosystems and pandemics and epidemics. Countries in the southern hemisphere have been implementing and designing national policies with the support of the United Nations Office for Disaster

Risk Reduction and other agencies. However, we have not seen that reflected in the provision of the means of implementation required to support those efforts.

Recent events have shown the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures, in particular on developing countries, in terms of our disaster-recovery efforts. On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, we thank the Secretary-General for his appeal to avoid the blocking of any support due to the imposition of such measures in the specific situation of the major earthquake that devastated Syria a few months ago. We therefore once again urge all States to abstain from enacting and implementing such measures.

Finally, we wish to thank the co-facilitators of the negotiation process for their tireless efforts.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the First Deputy Minister of Emergency Situations of Kyrgyzstan.

Mr. Mambetov (Kyrgyzstan) (*spoke in Russian*): I wish to share some information on the results of the midterm review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 in the Kyrgyz Republic with respect to comprehensive approaches to disaster risk management.

To date, our Republic has achieved significant progress on six targets in the midterm period, such as reducing the mortality rate of disasters by a factor of 2.5, reducing the number of human victims fourfold and reducing direct economic loss by 0.8 per cent. Our Republic has joined the list of countries that adopted a disaster risk reduction strategy and has achieved progress in expanding and strengthening regional and international cooperation. We have also made progress in establishing an early-warning system. Speaking of best practices, I would like to note that we have introduced government statistical reporting on emergency situations with data on the global Sendai targets. We have also introduced a mechanism for reporting on Sendai Framework target achievements. We have reached a 93 per cent implementation rate of the first-stage disaster risk reduction plan, which was adopted on the basis of the Sendai Framework. Obviously, we have faced a number of problems, the main ones being the coronavirus disease pandemic, which continues to have an impact on the socioeconomic development of the country; the global trends related to climate change; problems related to the creation of emergency funds, reserves and stores that are sufficient for the

localization of and response to emergency situations; increased risk of disasters in the technosphere due to economic growth; challenges related to conflicts and crises that have a negative impact on the country's sustainable development.

As for partnerships and joint efforts, I would like especially to share that an international United Nations expert mission was carried out in our country in 2022. A diagnosis of our disaster risk reduction capacity was carried out across seven sectors, covering 29 central State bodies and three regions. That is a consolidated effort that now requires establishing tangible paths to solutions and the provision of support from development partners.

Turning to the main priorities of action through 2030, the Kyrgyz Republic will focus its efforts on the implementing national strategies and plans for the development of the country in the medium and long term, which involves issues related to disaster risk reduction. We are also focusing efforts on, and anticipating support for, the implementation of our road map on disaster risk reduction due to slowly emerging dangers and threats related to climate change; the implementation of a national climate change adaptation policy in the field of disaster risk reduction; and the development of automated early-warning systems for local populations. The Sendai Framework has laid the foundations for changing State policies and approaches to the management process in terms of legislation and the practical implementation of Sendai targets.

In conclusion, I would like to note that today, we face the threat of climate change and an increase in emergency situations, we wish to highlight our commitment to accelerating the process of implementing the Sendai Framework and the European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction Road Map 2021–2030 and developing mutual cooperation. In that respect, Kyrgyzstan is working in line with relevant resolutions and will spare no effort to achieve the final results and targets of the Sendai Framework.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to remind delegations that statements should be limited to three minutes for delegations speaking in their national capacity and five minutes for delegations speaking on behalf of a group of States.

I now give the floor to the Vice-Minister of Territorial Planning and Development of Dominican Republic.

Mr. Matías (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): We align ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Cuba on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and the statement to be made by the representative of Uruguay as host State of the eighth Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.

The Dominican Republic has been classified as the fifth-most vulnerable country in the Latin America and the Caribbean region, after Haiti, Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras. The threats of natural and anthropogenic phenomena are part of our history. The impacts on socially vulnerable sectors require proactive social protection policies. Globally, in these times of rapid climate change, a culture of disaster risk management is a *sine qua non*. One challenge is the building of a new paradigm, a culture of risk management. We need more risk management and less disaster management.

All public, economic and social sectors that intervene in territories have the duty to cultivate risk management as an intrinsic part of their daily decisions. Risk management requires an everyday approach — an everyday culture that is capable of considering disaster response as an opportunity for the sustainable development of people and an opportunity to overcome poverty, the main driver of risk. It is our responsibility as Governments to think and act consciously, because the risks will increase. We must cultivate disaster risk management as a value in order to eliminate the hardships of socially excluded individuals. The heroes are the citizens who finance public budgets; they are the survivors of the impacts. Their experiences, historical memory, customs, knowledge and response capacity must be part of public risk management policies. We must recognize the contributions of our people in the past. Community response capacities are lessons learned. Survival in the face of deadly consequences has been possible due to the popular knowledge of our ancestors, the knowledge that one can live using science.

The Government of the Dominican Republic has committed to and driven a risk management approach in the multiannual public sector plan and other planning instruments, the institutional performance evaluation system and the technical standards for public investments in land use. In science and technology, we have made progress with the risk and loss management information system and the Dominican Republic is measuring all of that in real time.

Finally, we want to call on the Governments of the world to build this paradigm and address the factors that drive risk, such as poverty, environmental issues, climate change and social inequality, which are key to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Disaster Management of Japan.

Mr. Nakano (Japan) (*spoke in Japanese; English interpretation provided by delegation*): As the Vice-Minister for Disaster Management from the birthplace of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, I am honoured to attend this important meeting and present Japan's vision.

The floods in Pakistan and the earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria are among the major disasters that occur frequently in the world. I would like to express my condolences to the victims and my heartfelt sympathy to all those affected.

“Yokohama”, “Hyogo” and “Sendai” — nearly 30 years have passed since the strategies bearing those Japanese place names were adopted and the world started disaster risk reduction. The world has moved forward with various policies. However, disaster risks are now increasing globally at a faster pace. Countries face common challenges, including the increasing frequency of disasters due to climate change and increasing vulnerability due to urbanization and other factors.

To address those issues, Japan will work on the following three things in the run-up to 2030.

First, we will strengthen disaster risk reduction in Japan. This year marks the 100th anniversary of the Great Kanto Earthquake. We will never forget that disaster, which killed more than 100,000 people in and around Tokyo and kick-started the development of a new countermeasure plan against the next major earthquakes.

Secondly, we will enhance support for developing countries. We support disaster risk reduction efforts that also contribute to climate change adaptation. We also promote the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction that incorporates disaster resilience into infrastructure investments.

Thirdly, we will further promote international cooperation. In particular, as disasters occur

frequently around the world, building back better has never been more important. Based on the political declaration (resolution 77/289), we call for the support and cooperation of other countries for the sharing of experiences under the International Recovery Platform.

In addition, following the recent earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria, we will provide recovery assistance by utilizing the knowledge of Japan. Moreover, Japan chairs this year's Group of Seven and will lead discussions towards accelerating international cooperation that contributes to risk reduction. The theme of that plenary session will be “Charting liveable pathways for humans and nature”.

Since ancient times, Japanese people have coexisted with nature, while being aware of both its blessings and its calamities. Let us move forward together towards achieving the goals of the Sendai Framework by 2030. I conclude my statement by calling for solidarity and cooperation among countries.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Minister for the Interior and Community of Germany.

Mr. Saathoff (Germany): The risk landscape has changed drastically since the adoption, in 2015, of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, and risk creation is outstripping risk reduction. We have seen an increase in disasters worldwide. The coronavirus disease pandemic, floods, droughts and rising conflicts have shown that we are vulnerable. Therefore, the objective of the Sendai Framework is more relevant than ever before.

Nevertheless, the midterm review showed that we have not yet reached the targets set by the Sendai Framework. In the face of the global climate crisis, our time is clearly running out. Let me say this as a child from the North Sea coast: we have feared rising sea levels for centuries, and the only approach to take against it is to work together, and not against each other, because we face the danger together.

We need to improve risk-informed planning and decision-making in our administrations. Strengthening those capacities will reduce risks from the outset and enhance our preparedness for extreme events. We need to address fragile contexts better, as they suffer the most by far from disaster events. Germany will continue to support partners and people in

need through humanitarian assistance as well as development cooperation. Those most affected by disasters need to be systematically strengthened with transformative recovery and preventive approaches facilitating anticipatory action and transitional development assistance.

At the national level, we have reached a significant milestone in our implementation of the Sendai Framework and adopted the German resilience strategy in 2022, which incorporates a holistic and whole-of-Government approach to disaster resilience. Looking ahead to 2030, implementing the resilience strategy will be our focus. That includes strengthening our civil protection system to be better prepared and to provide early warnings, as well as stepping up our climate adaption action. All our efforts have taught us that resilience is only achieved jointly. We need to include all of society as well as the whole of Government. Only when we work together and learn from the different experiences can we improve the resilience of us all.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the State Secretary and Director-General of the Agency for Development and Cooperation of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland.

Ms. Danzi (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): With a geography made up of constantly evolving forests, mountains and glaciers, Switzerland has a long history of risk management. It is with that experience in mind that we witnessed the birth of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030; one could say that we were one of its midwives. I am pleased to share with delegations three key factors that contribute to the success of the Swiss approach and that also guide our international cooperation.

First, we encourage risk management at the local and subnational levels. In concrete terms, responsibilities and powers are delegated downwards, which makes it possible to promote local knowledge.

Secondly, we learn from past disasters to build back better in the future — and, very important, we must continue to demonstrate that preventive measures are economically profitable.

Thirdly, Switzerland invests significant resources. Annually, we dedicate \$120 million to risk reduction through our international cooperation in order to improve the understanding of risk and risk governance, prevention and preparedness.

The midterm review of the Sendai Framework offers important lessons on financing for prevention, the importance of localization and the need to adopt a more inclusive perspective that takes into account the most at-risk groups, such as refugees, women, people with disabilities, the elderly and residents of informal settlements. Those are lessons that will allow us to develop the approaches needed to reduce vulnerabilities. To that same end, Switzerland undertakes to continue to work with partner countries to strengthen their resilience through an integrated risk management approach and to continue supporting partner organizations and initiatives. In addition, we are committed to encouraging complementarity between the Sendai Framework and the new loss and damage financing methods currently being considered in the context of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize one point. Switzerland is convinced that sustainable development and human well-being are indeed possible, but only if they can absorb all the shocks that still lie ahead. That is why we encourage a coherent approach to risk reduction and climate action. While that will never be easy, procrastination will cost us more, both individually and collectively. That is also why we welcome and strongly support the political declaration (resolution 77/289) adopted this morning in this Hall (see A/77/PV.71). We look forward to working with all partners to implement its recommendations. Switzerland also looks forward to welcoming delegations to Geneva in 2025 for the eighth Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Deputy Minister for National Defence of Poland.

Mr. Ociepa (Poland): The massive natural disasters, the disinformation, the cyberattacks and the war in Ukraine — all experienced in recent years — are tangible proof that there is no better moment than now to concentrate on the targets of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. As mentioned in the Polish voluntary implementation report, every disaster is not only a devastating loss but also an opportunity to learn from our mistakes, use the lessons learned and increase national resilience.

Since 2015, Poland has made intense efforts to achieve those goals despite challenges such as the global pandemic, war, hybrid threats, massive migration and

climate change. The preparation of the voluntary report in the middle of the Sendai implementation process enabled us to connect with all engaged stakeholders, including ministries, local Governments, scientists, universities, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. Let me present some of our significant achievements to date in the following areas.

First, with respect to partnerships, thanks to constructive cooperation with the Regional Office for Europe of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, in 2022 Poland became the first country to perform the latter's stress test to assess resilience capability, taking into account key indicators from various sectors. In addition, together with Polish scientists we built a data integration platform using a geographic information system software named GSBN, a national security system for all ministers, heads of central offices and other entities involved in crisis management, with a view to improving situational awareness, and we created a database of losses caused by disasters. In that way, we implemented the Sendai Framework and also used it to assess and manage risk locally. We also worked on prognostic models of the spread of the coronavirus disease in Poland in order to share data with researchers and generate scenario models using artificial intelligence. On the diplomatic front, the Government of Poland led intergovernmental negotiations on resolution 77/282, entitled "Building global resilience and promoting sustainable development through regional and interregional infrastructure connectivity", which was adopted unanimously by the General Assembly in April.

Secondly, our key success in the area of preparedness and early warning is Poland's national text message system, called Alert RCB. A fruitful result of cooperation between the Government and scientists, it is used to warn citizens of dangerous events and to increase public awareness of the threats arising from climate change. The Polish Government also established a platform integrating different data in one place, including satellite imagery, data collected by drones and other mapping tools in order to improve our early-warning system and build situational awareness among decision-makers. In the national midterm review process, we also identified a number of areas for further improvement, including risk education. Building a universal comprehension of disaster risk reduction among all members of society, from central and local decision-makers to emergency services and

insurance companies, remains essential for the full implementation of the Sendai Framework in our country.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that Poland made significant progress in disaster risk management during the period of the Sendai Framework. We are ready to learn and share our experience with others in order to make our disaster management system more responsive to the challenges of the current world.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the State Minister for Disaster Management and Relief of Bangladesh.

Mr. Rahman (Bangladesh): On behalf of the Government of Bangladesh, I am happy to join in this auspicious plenary meeting with a view to charting a reliable pathway for humans and nature, as well as sharing our achievements, challenges and future commitments.

I will start by sharing our experience from 14 May, when Cyclone Mocha, a very serious cyclonic storm according to the Bangladesh meteorological scale, first hit. It was classified as an extremely severe cyclonic storm by the India Meteorological Department and as a category 4 storm on the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale. While in this case there was zero loss of life and minimal loss and damage, the country experienced a death toll of 1 million in 1970. Recently, the number of deaths has been in the single digits, and it has now fallen to zero.

Effective early warning, anticipatory action, evacuation and shelter management as a response, as well as proper coordination to combat that cyclone, are examples of dealing with such disasters. Learning from that success will guide us in achieving the five targets of the Sendai Framework. To that end, after the devastating earthquake in Türkiye and Syria, Bangladesh sent very substantial humanitarian support on 8 February, including tents, blankets, dry food, medical teams with medicine, a 61-member rescue operation from the Bangladesh Army and five service and civilian defence members.

Bangladesh started the national voluntary report of the midterm review of the Sendai Framework to the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. The report was prepared through a consultative process among stakeholders across different sectors and disciplines. The country has emphasized proactive disaster risk management instead of a reactive response.

The threat of death in Bangladesh due to natural hazards was 3.10 during 2007, which was substantially reduced to 0.20 during 2019. The threat of death decreased by 100,000, from 0.58 in the period 2007–2014 to 0.20 in the period 2016–2020.

The coronavirus disease pandemic (COVID-19) slightly increased the threat of death in 2020. The number of affected people and the level of damage decreased significantly during the period 2016–2020, in comparison with the period 2005–2015. However, the country faced floods five times, affecting more than 5.4 million people, which amounted to the fourth-worst disaster in the world in 2020. Cyclone Amphan caused large-scale damage, but the threat of death was low due to successful evacuation measures and effective and inclusive warning and shelter measures. Managing floods and cyclones during the COVID-19 pandemic compounded the impacts, which required new sets of skill and knowledge.

The national disaster management plans for the periods 2016–2020 and 2021–2025 as a disaster risk reduction strategy were fully aligned with national and international policy frameworks. The 2021–2025 plan offers both national and disaster risk reduction strategies, with specific targets for cross-sector investments, improved risk knowledge and data and governance, with a focus on rehabilitation and recovery as dividends of disaster risk reduction. The localization of disaster risk reduction has been prioritized for community resilience. A total of 8.8 per cent of the national budget was allocated to disaster risk management over the last seven years. In the eighth five-year plan, covering the period 2021–2025, about 11 per cent of the national budget was allocated to disaster risk management sectors, even in the context of the pandemic. When we look back at our past, we find that there have been drastic reductions in the loss of life from disasters, as a result of disaster risk reduction investment. We believe that investment in disaster risk reduction is not a cost; rather, it provides dividends for development by reducing loss and damages. For persons with disabilities in disasters, we are fully committed to disability-inclusive disaster risk management, with an emphasis on disability inclusion, which will make the whole community stronger.

International cooperation in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation has substantially increased through multi-country and multi-donor contributions. But given the context, including emerging

risk and sustainable development, there needs to be an increase in the rate of investment from development partners and international organizations.

I will now mention a number of issues in respect of which we are committed to strengthening vigilance.

First, we will promote risk-informed decision-making for investment in development in disaster risk reduction, including green development and integrated nature-based solutions for livelihood pathways for human individuals and the natural environment.

Secondly, we will promote regional and international capacity-building partnerships for methodology and the application of loss and damages in order to enhance pre-disaster recovery efforts and initiatives.

Thirdly, we will promote the development of a disaster risk financing strategy, in partnership with regional and international entities and platforms, in order to ensure adequate funding and an effective mechanism for addressing the systemic nature of risk.

Fourthly, we will promote a culture of risk reduction among sectors, actors, communities and institutions that are inclusive in order to assist informed decision-making.

I call upon the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, Member State representatives and other stakeholders to enhance regional and international cooperation, share knowledge and practices, and mobilize resources in order to promote risk reduction efforts for viable pathways for both humankind and the natural environment. I would like to thank that Office for hosting this important plenary meeting to share experiences from across the globe.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Chair of the National Disaster Management Authority of Pakistan.

Mr. Malik (Pakistan): Pakistan aligns its statement with the statement delivered by the representative of Cuba on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

I am honoured to represent Pakistan and the nation's Disaster Management Authority here at today's forum and to acknowledge this timely and critical intervention, namely, the midterm review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. Those processes are critical, and there is a need for mid-course correction because of the rapidly

closing time window and the remaining baggage from unattended past agendas.

Today Pakistan faces the daunting challenge of amassing a colossal execution plan for recovery and reconstruction after last year's devastating floods, which impacted 30 million lives, cost much loss of life and resulted in over \$30 billion in loss and damage assessments. It is important to note that, in spite of the huge financial challenges, the Government of Pakistan has demonstrated outstanding resolve and has showcased its commitment to people's needs. Pakistan's military, especially the army, led rescue and relief operations and helped stabilize the initial phases of rescue, resulting in significant control over damage and impacts.

I also wish to highlight that, during this year's earthquake in Syria and Türkiye, Pakistan came forward in a big way to assist the countries in distress, while being a country in distress itself. We amassed over 10,000 tons of relief articles that were moved to Türkiye and Syria via air bridge, land routes and sea cargo dispatches. The Government of Pakistan stands fully committed to replicate those successful templates and to meet the Sendai Framework expectation thresholds.

Well-planned measures in disaster risk reduction look at a transformed, proactive approach by Pakistan in mitigating the risks and disaster management: building due resilience for potential disaster management, addressing all disasters and climatic emergencies lying in wait and sustaining a balance to uphold the regional and global objectives.

Having enacted comprehensive disaster management governance, an approach that is inclusive of local needs, national disaster risk reduction policies and a national disaster management plan, Pakistan keeps itself aligned with the four defining priority areas identified in the Sendai Framework. Keeping our focus on the midterm review, we advance the idea of realistic course correction recommendations, based on learning the shared successful templates that can be copied elsewhere, and making available technical inputs for early-warning and climate projections without boundaries.

The forum also acknowledges the digital divide and capacity gaps in various geographical zones and regions and economies, which delay the true implementation of disaster risk reduction, as envisaged. Climate threats are global, and they therefore warrant global objectives

and global success. Either all are safe or none can be fully safe from potential disasters and calamities. Leading pathfinders would do well to extend a helping hand to followers on the trail. Pakistan proposes the establishment of a dedicated global disaster risk reduction fund, under the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, to finance global and regional initiatives, on a separate track from climate-focused financing windows.

We acknowledge all global partners and supporters that have helped Pakistan to withstand last year's disaster, and we look forward to early recovery from the flooding. We also stand committed to enabling any of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction-driven balance recovery plans in order for the region and globe to be a success.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the Secretary of State at the Ministry of the Interior of Romania.

Mr. Arafat (Romania): First of all, we align ourselves with the statement made earlier today on behalf of the European Union (EU) (see A/77/PV.71) as well as with the remarks to be made on behalf of the Group of Friends of Disaster Risk Reduction.

I would like to express my gratitude for the opportunity to address this gathering on the occasion of the high-level meeting on the midterm review of the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. Romania is committed to advancing disaster risk reduction efforts and building resilient societies. We firmly believe in the significance of integrating disaster risk reduction into national development policies and plans. By aligning our strategies with the Sustainable Development Goals, we have witnessed positive outcomes that reinforce the need for a comprehensive approach.

The Government of Romania is oriented towards finding solutions. We have faced very difficult situations over the past few years, one of which was the pandemic. During the pandemic we all faced misinformation and disinformation that misled our populations not to accept being vaccinated, or not to accept certain advice from the authorities. Therefore, with the support of the secretariat of the European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction, we recently organized an action-oriented dialogue in Bucharest, with a focus on enhancing risk communication and preventing misinformation. The event was co-chaired

by Mami Mizutori, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, and was aimed at understanding and effectively communicating existing and future risks, ensuring evidence-based communication, and addressing misinformation and disinformation. High-level political representatives and technical experts from more than 30 countries came together to share knowledge and best practices for improving risk communication, particularly for vulnerable communities.

With the goal of fostering resilient societies through evidence-based communication and addressing disinformation, Romania will continue to be a promoter of the actions and recommendations outlined in the outcome document of that event hosted in Bucharest. To effectively implement disaster risk reduction measures, increased investment is paramount. Romania urges all nations to prioritize the allocation of adequate financial resources, explore innovative financing mechanisms and foster international collaboration. Together, we can mobilize the funding necessary to implement effective initiatives and achieve tangible results.

Romania also recognizes the significance of long-term investments in disaster risk reduction and the need for sustained political commitment. We emphasize the importance of allocating resources, not only for immediate response and recovery but also for long-term prevention and preparedness measures. By prioritizing long-term investment, we can proactively build resilient communities, reduce vulnerabilities and minimize the devastating impact of future disasters.

Romania is proud to share its experiences and best practices in disaster risk reduction. We have learned valuable lessons from past disasters, enabling us to develop effective risk management and resilience-building measures. By promoting the exchange of knowledge and expertise, we can collectively strengthen our efforts in disaster reduction. And when we talk about lessons learned, let us differentiate between lessons identified, which are indeed lessons to be learned, and lessons learned, which are lessons for which solutions have been implemented. Romania has two good examples of that.

First, after lengthy debates, the Government of Romania this year started funding private residential buildings for consolidation or demolition and reconstruction, without requesting inhabitants to pay for those services, with the aim of protecting them from

the risk of earthquakes, as there are now more than 300 buildings with a high seismic risk in Bucharest.

Secondly, we received loans from the World Bank for two important projects — first, to consolidate or demolish and rebuild 36 fire stations, which are a risk for the rescuers themselves; and secondly, to do the same for more than 70 schools, which are a risk to the children learning in those buildings. Solutions are therefore the future for us, and for lessons to be learned we must find solutions and implement them.

Enhancing international cooperation and partnerships is crucial for addressing the challenges of disaster risk reduction. Romania advocates the sharing of data technology and expertise in order to improve early-warning systems, preparedness and response capabilities. And we recognize the importance of regional and international collaboration, as well as solidarity and mutual support, in effectively managing transboundary risks.

In line with our commitment to inclusivity, Romania stresses the need to mainstream gender considerations in disaster risk reduction. We must acknowledge the differential impacts of disasters on women, girls and vulnerable groups. By adopting inclusive policies and strategies that address their specific needs, we can ensure that no one is left behind in our resilience-building endeavours.

In addition, Romania recognizes the pivotal role of the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism in strengthening an integrated response and cooperation among European countries. The response to the earthquake in Türkiye was a very good example of how the whole EU worked in a very harmonious way, under the coordination of the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism. We firmly believe that a coordinated and integrated approach is essential, both in the prevention phase, from a risk reduction perspective, and in the response phase, to minimize the impact of disasters when they strike. In that regard, the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism and its Emergency Response Coordination Centre serve as a vital platform for sharing resources, expertise and best practices in all disaster management phases and may serve as a model for other regions of the world. By fostering a culture of collaboration and solidarity, we can enhance our collective resilience and build a safer future for our citizens even in the most fragile settings. Romania remains committed to sustaining political

will and fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships to ensure the effective implementation of disaster risk reduction strategies beyond the scope of this meeting. Together we can create a future in which the resilience of our nations and communities is firmly ingrained in our policies and practices.

In conclusion, the delegation of Romania is honoured to be contributing to the discussions and decisions at this crucial meeting. By collectively reinforcing our commitment to disaster risk reduction, we can mitigate the impact of disasters, protect lives and livelihoods and build a more resilient future for all. And please, let us not forget that a lesson identified is only a lesson learned when the solutions are implemented. So let us learn the lessons and implement the solutions for our populations.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Deputy Minister of the Interior of Armenia.

Ms. Sargsyan (Armenia): I would like to thank the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction for organizing today's important event on the midterm review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. We very much appreciate the work detailing the achievements and challenges in disaster risk reduction for every country and region, as well as globally.

Since the launch of the Sendai Framework, there has been significant progress in building resilience at the national, regional and global levels. However, there have also been a number of challenges to its implementation as a result of limited data and information, complex or overlapping mandates, inadequate resources, the increasing complexity of risk and uncertainty and insufficient prioritization of risk reduction and resilience-building. Addressing those challenges requires a coordinated and collaborative approach with the involvement of all stakeholders, increased investment in disaster risk reduction, enhanced political will for resilience-building, improved data and information systems, strengthened coordination mechanisms, innovative and adaptive approaches to risk reduction and support for an all-of-society approach and intersectionality.

In that regard, with the establishment of my country's new Ministry of Internal Affairs, we have launched major institutional transformations aimed at promoting good governance and risk-informed decision-making.

In cooperation with our international partners and with the support of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, we have finalized the formulation, assessment and evaluation of a completely new national disaster risk management strategy. We want to emphasize that strong legislation that addresses the whole cycle of disaster risk management and lays out the roles, responsibilities and liabilities of all stakeholders is essential. While there is no single solution in disaster risk management, a complex and systemic approach to its complex and systemic risks, coupled with continued efforts to improve and elaborate knowledge, governance and cooperation, can help us become stronger and more resilient. Armenia is working diligently to promote and deepen regional cooperation in preventing and responding in a timely way to disasters that may have a major transboundary impact.

In our full support to the political declaration adopted today (see A/77/PV.71) as resolution 77/289, we affirm our commitment to deepening international cooperation at various levels and to sharing best practices and lessons learned. The promotion of natural, green-technology solutions, disaster risk reduction education and awareness-raising to keep the most vulnerable in the spotlight is the route that Armenia has taken.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Vice-Minister of Emergency Management of China.

Mr. Daoxi Wang (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): We align ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Cuba on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. The Government of China attaches great importance to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, and is an active participant in global disaster reduction action while working constantly to improve its comprehensive disaster risk prevention and control capabilities nationally.

First, our current approach is aimed at striving to improve our efforts in two directions and shifting our focus in three other areas. We are striving to combine our prevention, resilience and relief efforts and to align normal disaster reduction efforts with extraordinary disaster relief. We are shifting our focus from post-disaster relief to pre-disaster prevention, from tackling disasters singly to comprehensive disaster reduction

and from reducing disaster losses to mitigating disaster risks.

Second, we are reforming and improving our institutional mechanism for disaster prevention, mitigation and relief. The establishment of our Ministry of Emergency Management led to the creation of an emergency management system with Chinese characteristics, featuring unified command, professional and permanent capacity and responsive and top-to-bottom linkages. We have also established and improved an interdepartmental and interregional coordination mechanism.

Third, we are gaining a deeper understanding of disaster risks and mapping out our risk base. We have completed our first national comprehensive natural disaster risk survey to map out the general risk of natural disasters originating in China. Work is also under way on a full-scale disaster risk assessment and zoning.

Fourth, we are strengthening the collaborative management of disaster risks. We have set up a system of joint risk consultation research, comprehensively integrating prevention, rescue and relief, with pre-positioned rescue teams and a flattened chain of command, among other things. We have established a national emergency system with a comprehensive disaster prevention and mitigation plan. We are also carrying out education and awareness initiatives on disaster prevention and mitigation, reaching an average annual audience of 600 million people.

Fifth, we have strengthened investment in disaster risk reduction. The Government of China has invested a total of more than \$100 billion at every level to promote the implementation of nine key projects on natural disaster prevention and control. Efforts are also being made to step up the establishment of a regime for catastrophe-risk insurance with a view to increasing pay-outs for disaster insurance claims.

Sixth, we are strengthening disaster preparedness and our response and recovery capacity. We have established a five-level secured emergency relief supply system from central to local levels and enhanced the application of new and advanced technology. In addition, we have established a national comprehensive fire-rescue capacity and formed more than 3,500 professional rescue teams. We are also improving our post-disaster recovery and reconstruction system.

Seventh, we are strengthening international exchanges and cooperation, with an emphasis on working with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and other mechanisms. We believe the establishment of a Belt and Road international cooperation mechanism for disaster prevention and emergency management is important in supporting developing countries in building their disaster prevention and mitigation capacities while enabling us to improve our participation in international humanitarian assistance. As a next step, we will continue to promote the modernization of China's emergency management system and our capacity to actively implement the concept of a community with a shared future for humankind and the speedy achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the goals of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Reduction.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the President of Argentina's Agency for International Cooperation and Humanitarian Assistance/White Helmets.

Ms. Frederic (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I would like to say that Argentina aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Cuba on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. The Argentine delegation commends and thanks the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction for organizing this meeting and would like to reaffirm its commitment to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Reduction 2015–2030.

Our country has undertaken the midterm review to strengthen the management of vulnerability reduction in our communities and scale up prevention, mitigation and response. But we have also taken note of the lessons learned. In Argentina's view, it is States that play the central role in promoting public policies and strengthening community resilience. We want to highlight the law we enacted in 2016 establishing a national system of comprehensive risk management and civil protection, made up of a federal council of provincial authorities for civil protection, a network of technical scientific bodies and a national council of civil society and private-sector organizations.

We emphasize the importance of the role played by science and technology in mitigation and prevention. One example was Mexico and Argentina's collaborative roll-out of the AstraZeneca vaccine, which enabled us to provide enough doses for both countries in addition to donating 5.083 million doses to 12 other

countries. We have also strengthened our early-warning and emergency monitoring system tracking events 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, in order to improve decision-making. Another advance was the establishment in 2022 of our Agency for International Cooperation and Humanitarian Assistance/White Helmets, aimed at outlining a strategy for development and humanitarian cooperation and coordinating international responses to social and natural disasters. At the national level, Argentina has accredited three search-and-rescue brigades for collapsed structures who are trained to use the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group's urban search and rescue method. One of them was deployed to Türkiye and rescued three people found alive after 11 days under the rubble. In addition, in 2022 Argentina approved a three-year humanitarian visa for nationals or residents of Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean displaced by disasters. Argentina is implementing its national disaster risk reduction plan for 2018–2023, with 503 measures that require us to strengthen our national comprehensive risk management fund.

During its *pro tempore* presidency of the South American Common Market (MERCOSUR), Argentina is institutionalizing the consensus reached on disaster risk management issues. It will be crucial to strengthen our coordination and exchanges with other subregions, including through the MERCOSUR Meeting of Ministers and High Authorities for Integrated Disaster Risk Management, the Andean Committee for Disaster Prevention, the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency and the Coordination Centre for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America. Future financial support for that process is vital. We also highlight the establishment of the Fund for Climate Adaptation and Comprehensive Response to Natural Disasters of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, which is relying on contributions from Mexico and Argentina and already has regulation in place for its implementation and administration by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. While we are conscious of looming challenges, we can say that Argentina has made progress in building a template for comprehensive risk management among governmental actors, the private sector and community organizations and institutions, while reviving local and ancestral knowledge.

Lastly, we would like to express our commitment to leaving no one behind and building back better in

overcoming the enormous challenges that this world of inequalities is facing.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Parliamentary Secretary for the Ministry of the Interior of Latvia.

Mr. Rajevs (Latvia): At the outset, let me say that Latvia condemns Russia's war on Ukraine in the strongest possible terms. Russia's aggression has violated Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and it constitutes a blatant violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. As a result of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, 74 Ukrainian firefighters and rescuers have lost their lives, 220 have been injured and two have been captured and are still in captivity. We express our strong solidarity with Ukrainian firefighters and rescuers. Their high level of professionalism and resilience in such extreme conditions are amazing.

I am honoured to speak at this high-level meeting for the midterm review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 and would like to share some of Latvia's experiences in disaster risk reduction.

Latvia aligns itself with the statement delivered this morning on behalf of the European Union (see A/77/PV.71).

Disasters are the outcome of continually present conditions of risk. Latvia is committed to increasing resilience to disasters, especially as we expect that they will be further exacerbated by climate change. We in Latvia are particularly concerned about the risk and impact of forest and peat fires, floods, heat, ice and other things. The legal framework for disaster risk management in Latvia is determined by our civil protection and disaster management law, which monitors the performance of our comprehensive risk assessment. Based on that assessment, the State civil protection plan is updated annually. The Ministry of the Interior developed the plan and updates it in cooperation with other ministries and State and local Government authorities. Comprehensive and integrated approaches to disaster risk management are key to strengthening resilience. Coordination is critical, and investing in disaster risk reduction is crucial.

Latvia has taken advantage of the availability of European Union financial instruments to support disaster risk management efforts. We have recently

undertaken feasibility studies for the development of a national disaster damage and loss database and an early-warning system for determining the most appropriate early-warning solutions using mobile communications networks in Latvia. Both projects are on the way to being implemented and will reinforce Latvia's capacity to manage disaster risks. Awareness and education are issues repeatedly highlighted under all priorities of the Sendai Framework. Emergency situations and disasters can take many forms. The first responders to an accident or emergency are often not trained professionals but citizens and community members who are already at the scene. It is therefore important that they understand the risks they face. Latvia's State fire and rescue service has come up with recommendations and advice on how to behave in various dangerous situations so that individuals and societal groups are better positioned to engage in disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery.

I would also like to mention the invaluable importance of international cooperation in dealing with the consequences of disasters. As a recent example, I want to mention the horrific earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria in February and the global response to that disaster. Latvia, like many other countries, provided assistance to our Turkish colleagues at a very difficult time. Only together can we effectively respond to disasters and prevent their consequences.

In conclusion, I would like to express my gratitude to the President of the General Assembly for convening this important meeting and to thank him for the opportunity to reflect on the findings and recommendations of the midterm review of the Sendai Framework, as through the political declaration adopted today (resolution 77/289) we reaffirm our commitment to accelerating our actions to meet the targets that we defined in Japan in 2015.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Secretary of Risk Management of Ecuador.

Mr. Torres Bermeo (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by pointing out that in the course of its history, Ecuador has witnessed a series of events, both natural and human-made, that have sometimes been catastrophic — that is to say, producing a level of destruction that left our country seriously damaged and insecure on the social, economic and environmental fronts. The effects of such events often exceeded the

capacity of our society and our country as a whole to respond, because we lacked both the means to overcome those effects and the risk reduction action needed to mitigate them.

Since the adoption of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, my country has implemented measures to achieve the goals the Framework defines. We have deployed major technical, political and community efforts with a clear focus on continuing the work of building a resilient country. Starting with national planning, we included the goal of promoting disaster risk reduction and timely emergency responses to natural and human-made hazards in every sector and at every level in our national development plan. That policy is derived from more than 10 direct local guidelines and three national indicators forming a basis for national and local planning and requires creating and applying multilevel and multisectoral public policies in areas such as governance for risk management and guidelines for disaster risk reduction, guiding our regions in achieving greater resilience with methodologies that are flexible and adaptable to the various realities on the ground in our country. We have also implemented awareness-raising strategies that help to increase our communities' understanding of the risks that their populations are exposed to. Since 2017 we have increased more than 250,000 people's awareness of various disaster risk management issues at the national level.

In addition, among the general public, more than 156,000 people have passed online courses, a tool that has enabled us to reduce costs and make information more widely available and, above all, more easily accessible to the population, at no cost. An important milestone for the year 2022 was our resumption of work on our initiative Making Cities Resilient 2030. Currently, 35 municipalities have signed up to the programme and are working on its implementation, with the strong support of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and other agencies.

Those advances in public risk reduction policy are aligned with the priorities of the Sendai Framework, and risk management governance in Ecuador has unquestionably begun to gain acceptance as a notion that transcends governmental boundaries and engages society as a whole. Early-warning systems are also a priority for our country. Ecuador is one of the few countries in South America that has a system in place along the entirety of its coastline, including the

mainland and the Galapagos Islands, to alert us in the event of a tsunami warning. At the national level, we have implemented 46 early-warning systems for hydrometeorological hazards and 46 community warning systems, for a total of 92 components for that threat. While in 2015 we invested more than \$2 million in the implementation of sirens for the Cotopaxi and Tungurahua volcanoes, that is still not enough, and we will therefore continue to work on a national multi-threat early-warning system. At this point, I would like to mention that Ecuador has been considered for the first group of countries that are part of the Early Warnings for All initiative, for which we are once again grateful to the United Nations. We reiterate our commitment to participating in efforts aimed at making us a more sustainable and resilient country. That is why we are also working with multilateral agencies to obtain funding to be used alongside Ecuador's investments in order to complement and finally consolidate a national early-warning system.

It is important to point out that those achievements have been possible thanks to the political decisiveness of the Government, both central and local, as well as to public investment complemented by international cooperation, which has definitely strengthened our country's institutional capacities. However, the gaps are still significant. We recognize that there are still challenges that require urgent and collective attention, such as addressing underlying risk factors, with a focus on the social, economic and environmental factors that can exacerbate the impact of natural disasters. It is also important to strengthen scientific and technological support as fundamental tools for integrated risk management.

We also need to address financing for risk reduction in order to implement plans and strategies effectively and efficiently. In that sense, we want to make proposals and strengthen and innovate our means for financing. In particular, we see the need for a dedicated global fund for disaster risk reduction that could play a key role in accelerating progress towards the Sendai Framework targets, with a focus on developing countries. Such a fund would provide a mechanism for mobilizing resources, promoting innovation and facilitating collaboration among stakeholders around the world in financing concrete and tangible actions to reduce risks. As a nation, we are developing a plan with a vision for 2030 that guides strategies for managing,

reducing and preventing current and future risks at the national, sectoral and territorial levels.

Finally, we call for continued efforts to build a global policy for disaster risk reduction. We welcomed the creation of the Loss and Damage Fund at the twenty-seventh Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change after so many years of negotiations, and we look forward to seeing it authorized as soon as possible. We have all witnessed the onslaught of extreme events that have devastated our nations, so these actions will help us to meet one of our principal objectives and a goal shared by the entire world, which is to leave no one behind. Our country will continue to work tirelessly to achieve the goals of the Sendai Framework, strengthening strategies and implementing public policy for disaster risk reduction, and we will not stop.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): Before giving the floor to the next speaker, I would like to remind the Assembly that this is an extremely important meeting and that all delegations deserve to be heard. As members will recall, in his letter dated 11 May, the President stated that all interventions should be limited to three minutes for those speaking in their national capacity and five for those speaking on behalf of a group of States. I therefore strongly request the cooperation of all speakers in complying with the time limit established prior to the meeting, and remind them that it is there so that all voices can be heard in this plenary.

I now give the floor to the National Secretary for Civilian Protection and Defence of the Ministry of Regional Development and Integration of Brazil.

Mr. Wolff Barreiros (Brazil) (*spoke in Portuguese; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): It is an honour, as a representative of the Brazilian Government, to participate in this high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the midterm review of the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030.

This meeting gives us a valuable opportunity to reflect on lessons learned, examine changes in context and identify course corrections and new initiatives to achieve the results and goals of the Sendai Framework.

Our new Government has worked assiduously to resume the implementation of the Sendai Framework, seeking closer coordination with the United Nations

and reaffirming our firm commitment to risk and disaster management.

We are aware that climate change is one of the greatest risks to the security of our population and to the sustainable development of our country. Therefore, Brazil has endeavoured to improve our risk management policies and adapt to the new challenges imposed by global warming.

The sixth report of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is a call for our countries to redouble their efforts with respect to adaptation. Therefore, we recognize the importance of aligning the environmental policy with the risk management and sustainable development policies.

Our National Secretariat of Civil Safety and Security, the main organization under Brazil's National Civil Safety and Security System, has made efforts to identify other policies that may be aligned with the national civil safety and security policy so risk and disaster management is not undertaken in isolation.

The new Brazilian Government has endeavoured to establish an integrated and participatory governance of risk and disaster management, incorporating several actors responsible for urban planning, land use planning, water resource management and environmental protection, among others. The cross-cutting nature of those policies is a commitment of the Brazilian Government. We believe that this approach may contribute to a more effective implementation of the Sendai Framework.

We are aware of the importance of strengthening the resilience of our communities and infrastructure systems. To that end, it is fundamental to invest in public policies that take into consideration regional specificities in our country and the interdependence among economic, environmental and social sectors.

Knowledge of risk, the integrated planning of investments and cooperation among the various actors in preparedness, monitoring and warning actions are essential to an effective response and the mitigation of the effects of disasters.

In addition, we understand that we must intensify international cooperation so that, by exchanging experiences and knowledge, we may identify alternatives to ensure that our communities are prepared to face future challenges.

Therefore, our new Government is committed to participating in the international agenda and reiterates that Brazil is committed to achieving the goals of the Sendai Framework in close cooperation with other countries and partners in order to increase the resilience and security of our societies.

We recognize that the path ahead may be challenging but we are confident that together we will be able to overcome the challenges and ensure a more secure and sustainable future for all. I reaffirm Brazil's commitment to disaster risk reduction and sustainable development.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Vice-Minister for Emergency Situations of Kazakhstan.

Mr. Pshembaev (Kazakhstan) (*spoke in Russian*): It is a great honour for me to today join the participants in this high-level meeting on joint work for risk reduction for a sustainable future. For eight years already, our countries have been implementing the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. Thanks to our common efforts, much has been achieved with regard to preventing emergencies.

In 2022, Kazakhstan conducted a midterm review of the implementation of the Sendai Framework. Thanks to our efforts, we successfully implemented a project to build resilience to disasters and accelerate the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, initiated by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction.

In order to reduce the risk of landslides in mountainous regions of our country, we are currently building three retaining walls, with storage reservoirs encompassing a total of 19 million cubic metres. The investment mobilized by the State to build them is approximately \$82 million. This year, we are planning to authorize the construction of one of those walls in the Ayusay gorge, near the city of Almaty, and, in so doing, will ensure the safety of 50,000 people. Another important issue is decreasing the risk of high-water threats and floods.

Since 2017, under our road map, we have implemented more than 400 projects worth more than \$100 million to protect settlements, as well as transport infrastructure and economic facilities. The measures we have taken have allowed us to address the risks to more than 200 settlements and minimize the risks to

more than 500 settlements. This system of protective measures implementation planning and the financing of those plans has had a positive impact on reducing flood risks.

To improve the security of its population, the Republic of Kazakhstan is implementing a road map that lays out a package of measures to improve the effectiveness of its efforts aimed at ensuring seismic safety in the country. Last year, we expanded the seismological monitoring network and modernized more than 20 seismic stations.

With regard to digital technology development, Almaty has installed nine automated seismic stations for earthquake early warning.

The development of volunteer movements is gaining momentum in the country. In order to address the pandemic, approximately 1 million people joined volunteer movements, and more than 1.5 million citizens of our country received assistance. Currently, the Ministry for Emergency Situations, together with the Disaster Risk Reduction Centre, is engaged in implementing an early-warning system for Central Asian countries. That issue was raised at the initiative of the Ministry for Emergency Situations of Kazakhstan at the annual regional forum, held in Tashkent.

At the regional forum in Dushanbe, the participating countries approved the protocol of intent on the integration of earthquake early-warning systems. The Ministry for Emergency Situations of Kazakhstan has repeatedly introduced and endorsed initiatives to ensure disaster risk reduction, early-warning, climate change adaptation and the inclusive management of corresponding risks. This forum allows us to improve the national strategies of the countries in our region, given the existing cross-border threats, and coordinate joint efforts to improve the preparedness of emergency services to respond to disasters in a timely manner. I would also like to note the fact that we have carried out joint work with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and the CIMA Fund to launch the DesInventar-Sendai Disaster Information Management System in pilot mode.

There is no doubt that the Ministry supports the introduction of new technologies and is open to the further sharing of experiences on disaster risk reduction.

In conclusion, I reiterate Kazakhstan's dedication to the priorities of the Sendai Framework, assure the Assembly that Kazakhstan is actively working to implement the goals and objectives of the Framework and express my gratitude for the invitation.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Deputy Minister of Public Safety of Canada.

Mr. Tupper (Canada): I thank the General Assembly for the invitation to address Member States today. I am pleased to join them at this very important midterm review and to provide an overview of Canada's progress on the commitments of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Since we signed the Sendai Framework in 2015, the risk landscape of our world has grown increasingly complex. Disasters around the world have grown in frequency and intensity, and Canada is no exception. We too have experienced the devastating and growing impacts of climate change and extreme weather. We are regularly reminded of the vulnerability of our interconnected social, economic and environmental systems. Even as I stand in this Hall today, my colleagues at home are dealing with unprecedented fires in the western provinces of my country and flooding in the eastern provinces, both of which require around-the-clock management. These events further underscore that more work is needed to reduce the impacts of disasters.

(*spoke in French*)

Over the last seven years, Canada has made significant and meaningful progress towards implementation of the Sendai Framework. We have integrated the targets of the Framework into a whole-of-society disaster risk-reduction strategy, the Emergency Management Strategy for Canada, to build a robust disaster risk architecture that can adapt to meet disaster challenges through 2030 and beyond.

Building on the Sendai Framework, the Canadian Government has invested in adapting to a changing and increasingly unpredictable risk landscape. Canada is firmly committed to a collaborative and whole-of-society approach to disaster risk reduction and climate-change adaptation. We established a humanitarian workforce programme that has funded non-governmental organizations in Canada to build capacity to respond to all-hazard events, including the coronavirus disease

pandemic and such natural disasters as floods and wildfires. Looking ahead, we will continue to engage with key partners and stakeholders on the need for a civilian response capacity. Recently, Canada has put forward an ambitious national adaptation strategy that provides a road map for whole-of-society action to help prepare communities for the impacts of climate change and the increase in climate-change-related disasters.

(spoke in English)

Recognizing the need for a forward-looking picture of the risks we will face, the Government of Canada has unveiled a national risk profile to provide a comprehensive national picture of hazards and the capabilities we have to respond to them. With this information, Canada will be better informed of potential risks and better prepared to respond. The Government of Canada is also developing tools such as the Social Vulnerability Index, which analyses social vulnerabilities to natural hazard threats, and the Flood Hazard Identification and Mapping Programme to help Canadians better plan and prepare for future floods. These initiatives will allow Canadians to have improved access to disaster risk information and mechanisms that support disaster risk actions.

Canada is committed to supporting women and girls in their efforts to mitigate and adapt to changes that threaten their safety and livelihoods. The Government of Canada is at the forefront of the global effort to advance gender equality and empower women and girls, including through our Feminist International Assistance Policy, humanitarian efforts and environment and climate action. We must continue to make this a priority.

Canada is proud to be a strong supporter on many multilateral fronts. We will continue to help the most vulnerable countries build resilience through effective and meaningful international cooperation and global partnerships. In this spirit, the Government of Canada is pleased to continue supporting the Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems initiative to help least developed countries and small island developing States establish multi-hazard early-warning systems. This is part of Canada's ongoing commitment to helping ensure that people around the world have access to alerting technologies that can save lives and damage to property.

While the international community has made important progress since 2015, we must continue to be

bold, take ambitious steps to build resilient communities and protect the most vulnerable. Canada will continue to support international disaster risk-reduction efforts and will work closely with international partners to ensure we leave no one behind. We will continue to work together to prioritize building our collective resilience to achieve the Sendai Framework targets by 2030 and help move towards the global implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Mr. Guevara Ortiz (Mexico) *(spoke in Spanish)*: Mexico welcomes this high-level meeting, which brings us together today to exchange perspectives, challenges and best practices, with a view to achieving the objectives of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, which are undoubtedly key to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the various agendas and programmes linked to a single mission: eradicating poverty, protecting the planet and ensuring prosperity for all.

In Mexico we understand that all risk is systemic and that its impacts take form across sectors and to degrees that affect the most vulnerable. It is therefore necessary to join efforts to break with institutional and intergovernmental silos and achieve a sustainable, safe and resilient country. The valuable lessons learned and shared by the international community are fundamental to this end.

In 2022, to reaffirm our commitment to the Sendai Framework, Mexico prepared a national midterm report on its implementation that focused on the execution of multisectoral actions related to understanding disaster risk, strengthening preparedness and response actions, and establishing specific risk-management areas within the sectors of land-use planning, urban development, agriculture, energy, water, natural resources, education, health, tourism and the armed forces. As a result, further disaster risk assessments have been drafted — on public infrastructure and in contracting and managing risk-transfer instruments for the protection of public finances in the event of disasters. We have also identified our ability to increase training and professionalization on the subject, promote citizen participation and foster greater linkages between the public administration and social and private sectors.

To strengthen and expand these initiatives, we have designed a national strategy for comprehensive disaster risk management with the aim of integrating it into strategic sectors for sustainable development,

reducing vulnerabilities and preventing risks. We would emphasize that the first specific objective of the strategy was met this year with the establishment of a national prevention committee, the first of its kind in our country. We also established a national network of schools, institutes and universities to provide education, training, professionalization and certification in disaster risk reduction throughout the country. Through the national strategy, we have also strengthened local capacities for resilient communities and created community prevention committees so that citizens are trained and informed in risk reduction and participate in a coordinated manner with the authorities in emergency and disaster response. We have also made progress in the implementation of a multi-hazard early-warning system.

The road to achieving the full implementation of the Sendai Framework remains long. It is essential to redouble efforts to achieve the goals and targets set and thus reduce people's vulnerability and provide the infrastructure so that they can live in a safe, sustainable and resilient environment.

We pledge Mexico's strong support to achieve that.

Mr. Rico (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): As the host country of the VIII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean, held in Uruguay's eastern coast from 28 February to 2 March, it is an honour to address this plenary meeting and to present the points of view of Latin America and the Caribbean, pursuant to the review of the platform on progress made in the regional action plan and in keeping with the midterm review of the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

The Americas and the Caribbean have some of the greatest diversity worldwide with regard to topography, geography, biodiversity and cultural diversity. Nevertheless, that same diversity that enriches and lends vitality to the region, also carries with it vulnerabilities in multiple dimensions, with great asymmetries that also make it complex.

In 1997 and 2017, one of every four global disasters and 53 per cent of economic losses caused by climate-related disasters occurred in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The Americas and the Caribbean and the midterm review process of the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction has been highly

participative and inclusive. In addition, it identified valuable progress and challenges. It is evident that much remains to be done if we are to meet the goal of leaving no one behind, especially in the context of the current climate crisis and, above all, more than two years after the start of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, which caused significant setbacks and exacerbated existing problems in various regional and global aspects.

The reduction and management of disaster risk must transcend the exclusive context of the knowledge and experience of technical groups and experts and recognize ancestral and local knowledge in order to become an essential part of the planning and management of sustainable development.

Similarly, we need structural reform that moves from the traditional approach that is limited to identifying and responding to risks to a systemic and comprehensive vision of disaster risk that responds to the components of risk management. Both the COVID-19 pandemic and the climate emergency have amply demonstrated how risk exacerbates certain elements and itself increases as a result of multiple socioeconomic factors, such as poverty, social and economic inequality, gender inequality, unplanned urban development, environmental degradation, the loss of biodiversity, food insecurity and unequal access to health care, education, drinking water and other services, as well as weak governance and lack of access to information and expertise.

In that context, we must adopt a multisectoral approach with the coordinated application of comprehensive agendas that facilitate consensus that recognizes the systemic nature of risk and leaves no one behind. That approach must encourage the participation of national Government, local governments, civil society, the private sector and academia, as well as specific groups, such as women, young people, indigenous communities and communities of people of African descent, and people with disabilities.

The Americas and the Caribbean have progressed in their multisectoral approach for disaster risk reduction. That trend should continue and be supplemented with financing and investment strategies that harmonize efforts towards disaster risk reduction, sustainable development and climate action.

Using that integrated approach as a starting point, the specific recommendations set forth in the

regional position paper are cross-cutting with regard to the seven targets of the Sendai Frameworks and are grouped into five broad categories — essential actions; technical actions; legal, political and institutional actions; cultural and social actions; and financing and investment actions. Those recommendations can be found on the web page of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Uruguay associates itself with the statement made by Cuba on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and I would like to add a few remarks in national capacity.

The midterm review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction is a unique opportunity to renew political commitments, identify challenges and implement changes in national policies, investment and cooperation so as to prevent, mitigate and reduce existing and emerging risks by 2030.

In the context of the multiple crises we are facing, risk reduction planning presents special challenges for developing countries, which are suffering from the increasing intensity and frequency of disasters related to climate change, floods, droughts and other water-related catastrophes.

In the case of Uruguay, the experience of the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of a multidimensional risk management approach and the design of inclusive policies to reduce gaps at all levels, especially taking into account groups in vulnerable situations, including women and girls, people with disabilities and populations in rural areas.

In that regard, we believe in the need to decentralize governance and empower all stakeholders through the exchange of experiences involving society, the private sector, academia and decision-makers. It is urgent to strengthen coordination between scientific evidence and decision-making. Science and technology have a central role to play in disaster risk governance and, in particular, in evidence-based decision-making. However, developing countries have difficulty in accessing such resources and scientific data for disaster risk assessment, prevention and mitigation.

To achieve risk planning and management in compliance with the Sendai Framework, it is imperative to strengthen the means of implementation, ensure better access to funding, technical assistance and technology transfer, substantially increase the availability of, and access to, multi-hazard early-warning systems and

disaster risk information and assessments to support national Governments.

To that end, it is necessary, among other things, to advance in the adoption of measures that go beyond the gross domestic product in the measurement of development and allow middle-income countries and those countries that have reached higher levels of per capita income, such as Uruguay, to access development cooperation mechanisms, as well as those linked to scientific and academic cooperation, which are critical for building resilience.

In order to make progress in fulfilling the commitments made in the Sendai Framework in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we must reduce the gaps between countries. To that end, we must strengthen international cooperation, including South-South cooperation as a complement to North-South cooperation, thus allowing for more equitable access to technical assistance, exchanges of good practices and capacity-building.

Mr. Schönmann (Denmark): First, allow me to extend our thanks to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Disaster risk reduction is key. Man-made hazards are exposing vulnerabilities in critical infrastructure and vital societal functions globally. Against that backdrop, it is clear that risk reduction and mitigation have never been so pressing.

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 is an important instrument that helps ensure that we hold ourselves and one another accountable with respect to our shared goal of making our nations more resilient and safer. The multi-hazards approach advanced by the Sendai Framework is instrumental in moving the agenda forward.

When it comes to the world's most vulnerable populations and ecosystems, particularly least-developed countries and small island developing States, climate risks and disasters are increasingly posing an existential threat. It is a key priority for Denmark to scale up investments in adaptation measures and disaster risk reduction to strengthen resilience and respond to climate-induced loss and damage.

Despite several initiatives to reduce disaster risk at the national, European and international levels, we

note that the implementation of the Sendai Framework is not on track to reach the goals set for 2030. We urge everyone to do their part to integrate disaster risk reduction across the board and to deliver on those goals.

In conclusion, let me reaffirm Denmark's commitment to the goals and aspirations set out in the Sendai Framework.

Mr. Gombojav (Mongolia): We need to make progress in long-term development by working together to adapt to climate change, integrate disaster risk reduction and sustainable development and create road maps to implement them globally.

Mongolia's disaster risk reduction legal framework have been revised to align with the Sendai Framework as well as the disaster risk reduction national strategy, approved in 2017. Moreover, the national council on disaster risk reduction, headed by the Prime Minister of Mongolia, was newly established in 2018. The national and local councils have the major responsibility for strengthening disaster risk management in the country.

Mongolia has achieved some progress and made positive changes, but we also are facing some challenges. Investment in disaster risk reduction is still not enough, and post-disaster costs are much higher than prevention-related ones. Another major challenge is related to the early-warning system and the introduction of advanced technology to reduce risks.

As a way forward, I propose the establishment of a financial mechanism or platform for disaster risk reduction and sustainable development based on financial and banking organizations. I would appeal to all delegations to support that proposal.

The last proposal is to establish a Central and North-East Asia humanitarian assistance hub and disaster preparedness centre in Mongolia.

Mr. Curcio (Italy): First, let me thank the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction for this opportunity to discuss and relaunch our commitment towards the 2030 horizon, also through the political declaration (resolution 77/289) that we adopted this morning.

We are speaking these words in this important Assembly even as, as all are aware, in Italy a series of multiple, extremely intense events has hit the Emilia Romagna region, causing severe damage and loss of

life. Indeed, we are here today to talk about disaster risk reduction as a fundamental part of the social and economic development of communities and an essential building block for a sustainable future.

We in Italy have a solid legislative framework for the entire risk management cycle and have developed consistent and effective risk-governance plans, which are key to the proper and full use of available financial resources. Furthermore, in risk-prevention strategies and actions, the involvement of all public and private actors is essential to agreeing on short-, medium- and long-term objectives.

In that respect, the relationship between the decision-making process and science, with a multi-risk approach, is crucial, especially when we talk about prevention and understanding disaster risk.

We have more than 30 years of experience in that field. It is precisely within that context that Italy has developed effective multi-hazard early-warning systems over the years. And while, sadly, we counted a number of victims of the recent floods, innumerable human lives have been saved by prevention and preparedness actions.

I also want to emphasize the importance of effective communication to inform the population about disaster and risk scenarios on their territories. We have been doing this for years, with the involvement of local volunteers.

With respect to investments in active risk-reduction policies, Italy since 2010 has adopted regulations to promote seismic prevention and actions to reduce vulnerability. It is clear that the volume of investments needed to generate a real impact on risk reduction is too high to be covered only by public finance resources. Private capital must be brought on board as well.

When it comes to building back better, that practice has already been adopted for years during reconstruction phases.

Italy is also strongly engaged in international cooperation activities in the area of disaster risk reduction. Prevention, inclusiveness, ownership and innovation are our keywords.

Our efforts focus on reinforcing local capacities through training and effective early-warning and early-action systems, in line with the global Early Warnings

for All initiative launched by the Secretary-General last year.

In conclusion, the Sendai Framework has been a great vector for our system for rethinking and channelling many of our disaster risk reduction strategies and actions. We are here today to recommit to the full implementation of that powerful instrument.

Mr. Hellman (Finland): It is an honour to be here today. Finland strongly supports the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. Every aspect of sustainable development can be undermined by disasters, which are becoming ever more frequent owing to the rapidly changing climate.

The vast majority of natural disasters are water-related. At the United Nations 2023 Water Conference in March, the global community made a strong call for enhanced action to reduce the risk of water-related disasters. We must break down the silos between disaster, water, climate and environmental policies for a comprehensive approach to managing risks. It is critical to ensure an effective follow-up of the Conference, including through a system-wide approach by the United Nations to the issue of water.

It is clear that we need to urgently step up action to extend coverage of early-warning systems to the whole world. Finland greatly appreciates the Secretary-General's Early Warnings for All initiative, which we support through key financing mechanisms such as the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Systematic Observations Financing Facility and the Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems Initiative. Furthermore, through Finland's ongoing bilateral projects in Asia and Africa, millions of persons will benefit from improved weather and early-warning services.

Persons with disabilities continue to be among those who are most impacted by disasters. It is therefore vital that disaster risk reduction and preparedness be designed from the start in a disability-inclusive manner, with the equal and meaningful participation of organizations of persons with disabilities. We also need disability-disaggregated data, disability-inclusive risk information and crisis communication. Critical information and infrastructure need to be accessible, and support and services should be inclusive.

Disasters also amplify gender inequalities. We must ensure that gender equality is integrated into

all areas and levels of disaster risk reduction and emergency preparedness and promote the participation and leadership of women and girls in all their diversity.

Further, we must involve local communities. Local people are the first responders and know their own needs best.

Achieving systematic inclusivity requires system-level changes. A fast-tracked implementation of the Sendai Framework, in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, is a great way to do that. With strengthened cooperation between stakeholders from all levels, both public and private, we can accelerate that important work and ensure that no one is left behind. Finland stands ready to cooperate with all members.

Mr. Tuñón (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Panama, I would like to express my thanks for the opportunity to participate in this high-level meeting on the midterm review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030.

Recent events such as the coronavirus disease pandemic and the impacts of hurricanes Eta and Iota in 2020 have once again reaffirmed the shared responsibility and commitment that we have as a national Government in reducing the risks of disasters and building more resilient communities and cities.

However, we cannot accomplish that task on our own. Those living in situations of vulnerability, local Governments and the State must be part of building a risk-management culture. Panama has therefore been making great efforts and contributing to reducing disaster risk in recent years, strengthening governance and governability through the creation of a specialized office in the area of comprehensive risk management. That office's technical secretariat has drawn up a road map for a new national policy on integrated disaster risk management for the 2020-2030 period, as well as a national strategic plan, which is of vital importance to the development of planned and structured management, with goals and objectives to be achieved by 2030 that have already been approved and are now being implemented.

Promoting best practices and governance processes via risk management by local authorities and increasing community resilience have been important parts of a process in which we hope to leave no one behind,

one that we are now strengthening. As a result of its commitment, the Republic of Panama has been working and contributing to drawing up a document that establishes a united regional position for the Americas and the Caribbean, which is to be presented at this high-level meeting.

Additionally, as a country that is a member of the Central American Integration System, we have joined regional initiatives that complement the implementation of the Sendai Framework.

Finally, and equally important, we wish to state that the Republic of Panama will host the third regional simulation on disaster and humanitarian assistance, to be held in June. That third simulation has the goal of contributing to strengthening the capacities of the national civil protection system and integrated risk management system in our country as well as in the Central American region and the Dominican Republic.

As a country, we will continue to implement our national risk management plan and all actions set out in the Sendai Framework.

Mr. Wimisberg (Israel): This month marks the seventy-fifth anniversary of the establishment of the State of Israel. Inspiring and contributing to a better world is part of the Israeli and Jewish tradition. Our dynamic system for fostering innovation and our vast experience in emergencies have created a strong foundation for disaster risk reduction activities and cooperation. We stand united with all States Members of the United Nations in supporting and implementing the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030.

We in Israel focus on three main pillars of disaster risk reduction: first, good practices at all levels of Government, especially at the municipal level; secondly, the inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action; and, thirdly, regional cooperation.

Allow me to elaborate. Since the adoption of the Sendai Framework, Israel has made much progress and formulated good practices in several areas. Our Government adopted a national strategy and action plan to prepare for and adapt to climate change. We also decided to include gender-responsive policies in protocols for all emergencies.

In 2022, we launched the “fanfare” system — the national earthquake early-warning system. We also

developed and implemented a virtual-reality project for an earthquake scenario in schools.

This year Israel also joined the Making Cities Resilient 2030 programme. The city of Holon was recognized as a world hub of knowledge on disaster risk reduction, and the city of Rishon LeZion is in the programme of learning cities. Mashav, Israel’s agency for international cooperation, has been an important actor in various activities in the field of disaster risk reduction. Mashav focuses on training experts and stakeholders from developing countries and involves on-site experience and deepening theoretical knowledge.

In the area of the inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action, we wish to highlight the following issues. The need for community-based services is an important point for Israel, as the majority of assistance to persons with disabilities is implemented at the community and municipal levels. We must ensure a whole-of-Government approach that responds to disabilities at various levels of Government, including a national platform for persons with disabilities.

Our global challenges, many of them a result of climate change, call for a sustainable path to development for all, especially in the field of disaster risk reduction. They demand a shift to a solution-centred approach based on practical and scalable solutions. We must work together towards finding innovative solutions to our common challenges, and Israel stands ready to share its know-how and expertise for that common objective.

Mr. Picado (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): My name is Alejandro Picado, and I am the President of the National Commission for Risk Prevention and Emergency Response of Costa Rica. On behalf of the Government of Costa Rica, I should like to express my appreciation for the holding of this important high-level meeting to take stock together of our progress on the occasion of the midterm review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030.

Costa Rica has placed risk management among the highest priorities of our Government because we are located in one of the most disaster-prone geographic areas. We have promoted the creation of a legal and institutional framework. We were the first country to formalize a policy and national plan framework following the adoption of the Sendai Framework. We have a national risk-management system as well as a national commission that governs the system for risk prevention and emergency response. Additionally, we

have a national law that commits all public institutions to planning the prevention of and response to emergencies, as well as to allocate resources therefor, which is key to effective implementation.

We have shown a strong commitment to monitoring the achievement of the Framework, as has been shown in the reports sent to the Sendai Framework Monitor. All those efforts have translated into significant steps forward in incorporating risk prevention into our planning instruments for development, public investment and the rules that govern our territorial planning.

We have determined that it is vital that we continue with the efforts already made to protect the public-services infrastructure, aspiring as we do to improve our financial capacity for the prevention of and response to emergencies, as well as increase support for the local dimension of risk management. To achieve that, we must make progress in a number of areas: achieving an effective linkage of all stakeholders in the national risk management system; providing access to quality information on risk for all the population; advancing the financial protection strategy in the event of disasters; strengthening the links among the risk management agenda, the sustainable development agenda and the climate change agenda; promoting business continuity as part of recovery from disasters; supporting a culture of accountability that ensures the timeliness and quality of data; minimizing the economic and social impact of disasters; and redoubling efforts to place vulnerable populations at the centre of our actions.

Costa Rica is a laboratory of best practices in risk management whose strength lies in inter-institutional cooperation and the solidity of our regulatory framework, aimed at ensuring development and social inclusion as well as sustainability and continuity in promotion, monitoring, follow-up, measurement and accountability with respect to risk management and adaptation to climate change, and their links with the Sustainable Development Goals.

Before concluding, I should like to warmly thank the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction for having included Costa Rica in the application of the Global Risk Assessment Framework and the programme on the application of the Principles for Resilient Infrastructure, as well as for promoting dialogue on best practices and lessons learned, which provides an opportunity for shared learning.

Finally, I should like to make a call for a greater integration of efforts; through our strong applause, I repeat, strong applause, let us send a message of hope to those wonderful and brave people who live in vulnerable and at-risk areas, who are overcoming adversity and who deserve that we all continue to do our very best.

Mr. Choi (Republic of Korea): I am here today to share with the Assembly how the Republic of Korea will implement the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 for the remaining seven years until 2030.

First, we shall strengthen our efforts to scientifically forecast and manage new disasters emerging from climate change and technological advances. As the disaster environment changes, the Republic of Korea is experiencing unforeseen, large-scale disasters. We are working to minimize losses and damage by increasing risk-informed investments and strengthening disaster-prevention standards.

In that vein, Korea established a new risk factor identification centre earlier this year and will continue to improve laws and systems based on analysing big data collected from diverse channels.

Secondly, we need to capitalize on the Making Cities Resilient (MCR) 2030 initiative to strengthen the capacity of local governments, which are on the front lines of disaster response.

Even as we speak, the Korean Government is supplementing the scorecard with local governments to build up their capacity to an international level and support them in engaging in MCR2030 through seminars and workshops.

Further, Incheon city, an MCR2030 Resilience Hub city in Korea, will be participating in knowledge-sharing, capacity-building and collaboration with cities throughout the world to build a resilient global village.

Thirdly, all countries around the world must actively engage in the Early Warnings For All initiative, which the Secretary-General launched last year.

Korea is the only country in the world to have ranked in the top three of the United Nations E-Government Development Index seven years in a row. It is our forte to trailblaze Government innovation using digital science and technology to serve the people better.

As we advance, we will share Korea's latest developments in science and technology and its accumulated experience in building multi-hazard early-warning systems along with the international community through official development assistance and invitational training.

Mr. Yap (Singapore): Singapore welcomes the convening of this high-level meeting, which is an opportune time for us to reflect on and examine how we can better address the systemic nature of disaster risk.

The increased frequency of disasters has had catastrophic consequences for lives and livelihoods. In 2021, disasters in the South-East Asian region resulted in more than 1,000 fatalities and 16,000 people injured and more than 350 missing. Small island developing States are also particularly vulnerable to the impact of climate-related disasters. That is why a broader, all-of-society approach to disaster risk reduction is crucial. For disaster risk reduction policies and practices to be efficient and effective, they need to be multi-hazard, multisectoral, inclusive and accessible.

Disaster risk is increasingly complex, and hazards can trigger one another other with cascading and compounding impacts within and across sectors and geographies. In that regard, being prepared for disaster management alone is not adequate given the disproportionate scale of displacement and suffering that an impacted community might face. Instead, States must give as much emphasis to reducing disaster risk as they do to managing disasters. Let me share three recommendations based on Singapore's experience as a small and low-lying island city State.

First, we must invest in early-warning systems as part of our efforts to monitor, detect and act quickly against disaster risk. Singapore is therefore pleased to support the World Meteorological Organization's Early Warnings for All initiative, which sets out concrete ways to build adaptation and resilience against disasters, especially in developing countries. We also deliver a spectrum of early-warning services to our residents.

Secondly, there is an urgent need for appropriate response frameworks that can address disaster risk quickly and effectively. In that regard, Singapore has put in place multi-agency response and coordination frameworks to address major incidents.

Thirdly, it is essential that the international community continue to share best practices and

solutions to address the gaps and challenges in disaster management. To support that, Singapore will be co-organizing the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Disaster Management Week in August, with the ASEAN Secretariat and the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management.

Singapore remains committed to a disaster risk-informed approach to sustainable development and to integrating disaster risk reduction into policies, programmes and investments at all levels.

We believe that those are some of the key steps that will accelerate the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. We look forward to working closely with Member States and our partners at the United Nations to further advance our efforts in that space.

Mr. Al Neyadi (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): Since the adoption of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, the world has experienced a number of natural disasters, which are becoming ever more acute. It is more difficult to overcome them than ever, and no country is safe from them. Yet the most vulnerable groups in the most vulnerable regions, including women, young people, children and indigenous and older persons, are the most affected by climate change, despite the fact that they are the least responsible for it and are the least endowed with the resources necessary to overcome its effects and repercussions.

We are currently engaged in the midterm review of the Sendai Framework and cannot but acknowledge that we are not on the right track to implementing the goals that we already have set, although we have made some progress in adopting risk reduction strategies and in obtaining information and data while putting in place early-warning systems. That progress has stalled owing to the frequency and the consequences of current risks, as demonstrated by the large increase in the number of human deaths and the great economic losses caused by disasters.

The midterm review of the Sendai Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals Summit, which will be held this year, are both an opportunity to take stock of the progress made towards the implementation of the Sendai Framework and to reorient our efforts.

In addition, the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28) will be held in the United Arab Emirates in November. In that context, the Member States will for the first time undertake a global evaluation of the progress made towards implementing the goals of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

The elaboration of a plan of action to be adopted at that Conference on adaptation will be a major achievement that allows us to ensure more flexibility and resilience.

At the twenty-eighth session of the Conference, States parties need to not only take stock of the overall progress achieved towards adaptation but also consider other issues, including the operationalization of the loss and damage fund as well as financing arrangements. The concept of loss and damage is informed by our knowledge of the large scale of losses due to climate change. The countries that are least responsible for the damage and have limited means for adaptation to climate change must be able to benefit from financing and compensation for such damage.

But what gives cause for optimism is the fact that we can minimize future losses and damage by implementing a unified, multisectoral plan of action. We believe that early-warning systems are one of the most effective means that can be used. That is why the United Arab Emirates stands fully behind the initiative of the Secretary-General entitled Early Warnings for All, which aims to ensure access to such systems for all peoples of the world.

Before concluding, I would like to speak about the national approach of the United Arab Emirates to the implementation of Sendai Framework. As part of my country's efforts in the area of disaster risk reduction, we have created a national disaster risk reduction authority to address risks at all levels. We have also created a national forum for risk reduction with the aim of responding to the requirements of the Sendai Framework. In addition, we have put in place a national strategy linked to the Sustainable development Goals and applied the early-warning system, while harnessing technology and satellite systems in addition to establishing policies for certain segments of society, including persons with disabilities, or, as we call them, people of determination, women, youth and the elderly.

In conclusion, we hope that the review conference will realistically assess the progress achieved to date on the Sendai Framework. It should also determine the means necessary to achieve our objectives expeditiously during the remaining seven years in order to meet the 2030 deadline. We must benefit from COP28 in order to promote our experience, strengthen adaptation measures and foster risk reduction policies. We look forward to welcoming all members to Dubai in November.

Mr. Andriakaja (Madagascar) (*spoke in French*): It is an honour for me to take the floor before the Assembly during this high-level meeting on the midterm review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. The topic that we are addressing today is the charting of liveable pathways for humans and nature. This issue is of great importance to Madagascar.

In that respect, Madagascar fully aligns itself with the statements delivered, respectively, by the representative of Cuba, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and by the representative of South Africa, on behalf of the Group of African States, as well as the statement to be made by the representative of Nepal, on behalf of the least-developed countries.

Madagascar, a unique treasure trove of biodiversity, is also one of the countries most at risk owing to climate change. Given that reality, the Government of Madagascar has put in place an adaptation strategy and has chosen to manage climate change rather than merely experience it. We want to draw on the experience of other countries and regions, ask for assistance when it comes to implementing our initiatives and propose our own contribution in terms of collaboration with the private sector.

The involvement of the private sector is feature unique to Madagascar, and we benefit from major resources thanks to the partnerships that we have with businesses, capacity-building initiative programmes, the Private Sector Alliance for Disaster Resilient Societies and other such similar initiatives.

I endorse what the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, Mami Mizutori, said in the statement she made in Bali last year: disasters are not natural but the result of the destruction caused by human activity.

The first viable path to reconciling humans and nature is therefore to ensure that information about risks

is disseminated. In Madagascar, it should be noted, the various stages of the early-warning process are shared by the meteorological services and the National Office for Risk and Disaster Management. The meteorological services are responsible for providing scientific and technical information on climate risks, while the role of the Office is to ensure coordination and to disseminate warnings effectively by mobilizing the various actors involved and to ensure adequate preparation and response measures

The second viable pathway is to mobilize all the intellectual resources of the country, including communities, traditional partners such as the United Nations, non-governmental organizations, the Red Cross, the private sector and academia.

Despite the fact that we have made some headway, we must continue moving forward in terms of governance and risk management so that we can achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, set for 2030, in terms of disaster risk reduction and development.

The midterm review of the Sendai Framework is a landmark and a call for us to further strengthen our multilateral cooperation in order to more realistically move towards the implementation of collective actions. We urge the international community to step up its commitment by providing financial and technical support to the most vulnerable countries. We also wish to sound a call for the establishment of a global mechanism for sharing knowledge, best practices and innovative technologies with a view to reducing natural disasters. By working together, sharing our knowledge and mobilizing all the resources at our disposal, we can chart liveable pathways for human beings and nature

Mr. Al-Zubi (Jordan): On behalf of the Government of Jordan, I would like to thank all present for being here this evening in order to evaluate the progress made within the midterm review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. We are thankful to the sponsors and organizers of this significant event, which, at the end of the day, aims to reduce the consequences of disasters and risks around the world.

As all are aware, risk management has become a global concern that requires cooperation and coordination to effectively strengthen our capabilities in order to promote and implement relevant national policies in line with the Sendai Framework. Such cooperation cannot be achieved without a common and mutual understanding as well as real and honest will.

Over the past few years, Jordan has taken important steps to institutionalize the concept and culture of risk reduction at the national and local levels, in line with the priorities and objectives of the Sendai Framework. That has come to fruition through the efforts made by the National Centre for Security and Crisis Management, in partnership with all relevant Government and non-governmental actors, including the private sector, to establish a risk monitoring and assessment system that covers most of the risks and challenges that Jordan and the region might encounter. Each and every potential risk has a corresponding plan in order to mitigate any consequences or impacts.

Moreover, it is worth noting that Jordan was one of the first countries to devise a national strategy for disaster risk reduction through close cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. That strategy has been linked to the Arab strategy developed by the League of Arab States, because we believe that borders cannot stop disasters.

Because we all live on one planet, we will certainly have the same fate. That fact requires a unified approach to face the global challenges of climate change, earthquakes, water shortages, flash floods and natural disasters. Regional and international efforts are therefore vital.

The circumstances, events, crises and disasters that the world has experienced have proved that survival, stability, security and development can be achieved only through international commitment and a deep understanding of potential capabilities and the way in which we employ those capabilities, as well as doing so at the right place, at the right time and in the right way.

Finally, in order to bring about a safe and resilient future in a thorough, complete and successful manner, we need to do the following: first, enhance our capabilities, including early-warning systems and response techniques as well as training and qualification, and, secondly, re-evaluate our relationship with nature. We must deeply respect nature. Simply put, we must be reconciled with nature.

Ms. Delaney (Australia): I would like to begin by acknowledging that we are on the traditional lands of the Lenape people. I pay my respects to their elders, past, present and emerging, and extend that respect to any First Nations people here today.

Australia is immensely proud to have worked with Indonesia and the United Nations membership on the political declaration (resolution 77/289).

We are here in New York at an important juncture. The world is facing increasingly complex, compounding and concurrent crises. Without question, climate change is increasing the frequency and severity of disasters. Meanwhile, the incidence of geohazards is not diminishing.

Australia's own resilience has been tested with the coronavirus disease pandemic, devastating bushfires and multiple flooding events. To tackle those challenges, we must work together, more closely than we ever have, to shape a better, more resilient world.

Australia is investing in genuine partnerships — with our Blue Pacific family, our South-East Asian neighbours and our friends further afield.

As a member of the Pacific family, our priority is to ensure that the Blue Pacific remains peaceful, prosperous and equipped to respond to future challenges. Australia will deliver a record total of \$1.9 billion in official development assistance to the Pacific this year, including support for climate mitigation, adaptation and strengthening resilience in the region.

We know that resilience requires a whole-of-society effort, one where disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation is fully integrated into policies and programmes.

Australia will soon launch a national action plan to guide a coordinated, whole-of-society approach integrating adaptation and risk reduction to strengthen our resilience and bolster preparedness.

We applaud efforts such as the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific, which delivers global best practice on an integrated approach to risk-informed development. We are working to establish multi-hazard early-warning systems. With each cyclone that passes through the Pacific, we are seeing fewer lives lost. That is surely a metric of enhanced resilience.

We are investing in resilient infrastructure at home and in the region. Roads, schools and hospitals — guided by partner priorities — are built to withstand the cyclones, floods and earthquakes of the future.

Crucially, our risk-reduction and resilience efforts will meet the needs and rights of all persons, equitably and inclusively. We strongly support the development

of a Sendai Framework gender action plan to hold Australia and other Member States accountable on that commitment.

I would like to close by thanking the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction for its ongoing commitment to creating safer, more resilient communities. Australia shares that vision. We have much to do.

Mr. Bourillet (France) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to take the floor in the General Assembly on behalf of France at this midterm review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030.

Today I have two main messages to share with the Assembly. My first message is to assure members of France's full readiness to implement the commitments undertaken in the context of the Sendai Framework.

At the national level, France has focused its efforts on four salient points.

First, it has stressed an understanding of risks to identify vulnerabilities and anticipate how an event can turn into a disaster.

Secondly, it tackles risk prevention by reducing existing vulnerabilities in territories and ensuring properly managed urbanization so as not to intensify risk exposure in future. For example, France this year will finish its programme to draw up local risk-prevention plans for the 600 most hazardous industrial sites.

Thirdly, with respect to crisis management, a new system to alert the population through cell phones, known as FR-Alert, was put in place, and efforts to prepare the people for crises were bolstered.

Fourthly and finally, we emphasize the sharing of experiences and resilient construction.

France is taking action to reduce risks at the international level as well. Between 2015 and 2020, French official development assistance financed projects aimed at enhanced disaster prevention to the tune of \$2 billion. France also fully supports the initiative of the Secretary-General aimed at achieving universal coverage by early-warning systems by 2027.

That is the aim of our Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems initiative, which today supports 78 vulnerable countries, to which France contributes €8 million every year. I invite all Member States to contribute to that effective initiative.

Finally, the Summit for a New Global Financing Pact, to be held in Paris on 22 and 23 June, should allow us to identify sources of innovative financing to better support vulnerable countries.

In conclusion, and this will be my second message, we must strengthen the implementation of the Sendai Framework. To do so, we must, first, improve our knowledge and management of new phenomena, especially those linked to climate change, for example in mountainous areas or in areas at risk of coastal flooding.

Secondly, we must enhance risk awareness in other public policies, especially in terms of land-use planning. Conversely, risk prevention must also include the concerns related to preserving biodiversity and ensuring accessibility and inclusivity.

Thirdly, we must ensure that all stakeholders are aware and involved, especially by strengthening risk culture.

Fourthly, we must ensure that the economic framework is in lockstep with prevention needs so as to ensure not only that an economic actor behaving rationally will choose behaviours that are most in line with prevention and disaster risk reduction but also that insurance systems and population-support programmes can be sustained in the event of disasters.

All of us together must remain more engaged than ever.

Ms. Petri Gornitzka (Sweden): Disaster risk reduction has never been more important than it is today. The midterm review of the Sendai Framework has helped us to reflect on the needs and to set a path for the years to come. In that regard, I would like to thank the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Globally, the deeply concerning devastation from disasters and conflicts has strengthened our resolve to focus further on prevention and preparedness to strengthen our resilience and to reduce disaster risks. We also see a growing need to reinforce the coordination between disaster risk reduction, climate mitigation and adaptation measures to reduce food insecurity. Furthermore, the degradation of biodiversity, forced displacement and migration need growing attention.

Commissioner Lenarčič excellently expressed the ways in which we, as the European Union, are committed to stepping up our work (see A/77/PV.71).

In Sweden, as in many parts of the world, the past years have brought the challenges closer to home. With the deteriorating global security situation, lessons learned from the pandemic and the escalating consequences of climate change, our perception of our own capacity and context has changed profoundly.

The coronavirus disease exposed gaps in our risk management systems. We have to ensure that risk information reaches the most vulnerable groups in our societies and that misinformation and disinformation do not prevent people from making informed decisions, to name just a couple of important lessons.

For us, the path ahead spells increased focus on prevention and preparedness. We want to prepare for the full scale of threats — from the increasing effects of climate change to escalating conflicts.

Sweden wants to make sure that our international support to disaster risk reduction better integrates a holistic and people-centric rights-based approach in building resilient communities and societies. And just as crises always begin at the local level, work on increasing resilience must be locally led and inclusive to make sure that it adapts to the context and leaves no one behind.

We see an urgent need to scale up anticipatory action and work ahead of disasters. In order to do that, we need to strengthen our risk assessment and early-warning systems and promote the use of prearranged financing. Without reliable and comparable data and more preallocated funds, we will not be able to engage in timely action to prevent and prepare for disasters.

Today's bleak outlook should underline that the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction is more important than ever. It provides a structure within which we are able to expand capacity and partnerships. Importantly, the Sendai Framework puts the United Nations at the centre. No country or region can face the escalating challenges alone. Action must be taken in a firm spirit of solidarity and multilateralism.

In our view, the political declaration from the midterm review (resolution 77/289) strikes a good balance among a range of commitments. It also sets out an ambitious, yet realistic, path towards the possibility

of a full-scale implementation at global, regional, national and local levels.

Let us seize that opportunity together. Strong partnerships will help us to realize our joint ambitions and commitments. Enhanced coordination and cooperation will increase the impact of our efforts towards sustainable investments. We are in this together; we will work this out together.

Mr. Behin (Slovenia): It is my privilege to address this important gathering on the midterm review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction on behalf of the Republic of Slovenia.

First, I would like to emphasize that, as a European Union (EU) member State, we strongly endorse the statement on behalf of EU member States on the Sendai midterm review (see A/77/PV.71).

Humankind is facing very challenging times. As already stated today, pandemics, climate change and armed conflicts have made our world even more fragile. I could say that risks are always a step ahead of us and thus require our constant adaptation.

The midterm review of the implementation of the Sendai Framework is an opportunity to assess the progress we have made in the past seven years at the global, regional and local levels towards reducing risks.

At the global and EU levels, Slovenia is engaging through constant active involvement in the activities of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism and has facilitated and contributed to the development of the Union disaster resilience goals.

At the regional level, Slovenia is an active member of the Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative for South East Europe. It is my pleasure to share with the Assembly the information that, at the end of this month, we are going to sign a joint declaration on enhancing capacity to improve detection and risk reduction in line with the South East Europe 2030 Strategy.

At the national level, we have doubled investments in disaster risk reduction in the period from 2015 to 2022. That increase is partially coming from the EU Cohesion and Recovery and Resilience Plan funds and is addressing climate-related risks in all phases of the disaster management cycle. The main beneficiaries of those investments are local communities. Further increases in the budget are foreseen also in the next two years.

Our country has followed the needs of the changing world and will continue to adopt legislation accordingly. In addition, the new disaster risk reduction strategy for Slovenia for the period from 2023 to 2030 is in preparation.

But have we done enough? We all know the answer. Slovenia has tripled the international assistance offered to affected countries in the past four years. That clearly shows that disasters are more frequent and more violent.

Nevertheless, allow me to conclude with optimism. I believe our joint cooperation and efforts are inspiring, and for that reason we remain strongly committed to our international disaster risk reduction community and our goals to pave the way forward towards a more resilient society.

Mr. Schaffhauser (Austria): We gather in this Hall today to highlight the importance of disaster risk management strategies all over the world, even in countries like Austria, where disaster risk management has been on the political agenda for decades and relevant measures have proven their success. The Sendai Framework and especially our national platform established through the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction supports Austria in putting resilience strategies into action.

Within our national platform, we have formulated several national goals following the four priority areas of the Sendai Framework. We systematically integrate the concept of multiple hazards into our early-warning systems and promote the implementation of impact orientation throughout the entire warning chain. We are establishing a national loss and damage database based on international standards for reporting mechanisms. In general, we aim to bridge the gap between science and practice via dedicated networks of knowledge and practitioners. We want to enhance access to risk-relevant data. Moreover, we see the importance of raising awareness of disaster risk in the general public. Finally, we also aim to link our national strategies with all international activities.

We acknowledge that the foundation of Austria's disaster-management system is the 400,000 volunteers, comprising firefighters, first responders and volunteer networks. However, we see changes in the willingness to participate in such networks, and it will be a challenge to maintain and keep these networks attractive and up-to-date in future.

In the course of the midterm review of the Sendai Framework, some new topics have emerged that require our focus and attention. The key to successful disaster risk management is strengthening local networks and collaborations. We have seen that the concept that “regions learn from regions” is a most promising approach to connecting stakeholders and facilitating action.

Although climate extremes occur on a daily basis, climate change is still not being sufficiently considered in the disaster risk-reduction cycle. We strive to integrate multi-hazard perspectives into national risk assessment. The inclusion of vulnerable groups must be a part of all considerations in disaster risk management. In terms of communication, new opportunities arise through technological advances. Besides the new focus on preparedness, all protective infrastructure has to be sustained in future. Overall, only the application of a systemic approach and the integration of all relevant stakeholders will guarantee resilient and sustainable disaster risk management.

Ms. Criswell (United States of America): My name is Deanne Criswell, Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). On behalf of the United States Government, I want to thank the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and the General Assembly for hosting this high-level meeting on the midterm review of the Sendai Framework.

Substantially reducing disaster risk and increasing resilience have never been more important. Compounding crises, such as climate change, pandemic disease and conflict, exacerbate disaster risk, especially in fragile and conflict-affected States where access to investment in disaster risk reduction is limited. The United States expresses its condolences to all of those affected by ongoing disasters worldwide.

Although we have achieved progress in understanding disaster risk and improving governance, we still face challenges in fully realizing disaster risk reduction for all. Taking stock of progress and refocusing action under the Sendai Framework will advance our shared mission of reducing disaster risk towards a resilient future. The United States supports the political declaration adopted in this Hall (resolution 77/289), and we appreciate its synergy with the global priorities, such as the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement.

Underscoring our commitment to helping reduce impacts of climate-induced disasters, the United States is proud to support the Secretary-General’s Early Warnings for All initiative. As part of the President’s Emergency Plan for Adaptation and Resilience, the United States, working with Congress, has announced plans to provide approximately \$40 million to help close the early-warning gap. We plan to invest up to \$75 million over the next five years to increase access to early-warning systems covering floods, droughts, cyclones and heat waves.

The United States believes that harnessing the world’s shared resources, knowledge and experience is key. Global collaboration will be at the heart of achieving success. We can save lives, alleviate suffering and lessen the economic and social impact of disasters if we partner broadly with civil society, non-governmental organizations, educational, scientific and technical institutions, local and regional governments, the private sector and other diverse stakeholders.

The United States also believes that data sharing will help us to more effectively understand, prevent and respond to disasters. The United States Geological Survey and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration disseminate information such as earthquake monitoring, hurricane forecasting and tsunami alerts to international partners. This information helps to provide critical warnings and improve situational awareness in times of crisis.

Beyond just data, the United States is proud to integrate scientific and technical expertise into our assistance and capacity-building partnerships. We actively collaborate with partners across the globe to reduce disaster risk from a wide range of hazards through training programmes and providing observational equipment and early-warning systems. Our ability to address emergent threats is rooted in the adaptability of our emergency-management workforce, our strategic international partnerships and our interconnectivity not only within our nation but across our international borders.

FEMA collaborates with the global emergency management community to advance disaster resilience and strengthen our operational posture to respond to complex crises. The United States is actively incorporating nature-based solutions into disaster governance, recognizing that nature itself can reduce impacts from disasters and climate events, while also

increasing resilience. In November 2022, President Biden released a nature-based solutions road map to put the United States on a path to unlocking the full potential of nature-based solutions in addressing climate change, nature loss and inequity. We are also accelerating scientific research to inform decision-making on climate change. The United States Global Change Research Programme combines the efforts of over a dozen United States agencies working together to better understand the processes that are reshaping the Earth's environment. United States Government reports and research findings are publicly available at globalchange.gov.

Finally, we call on all States Members of the United Nations and stakeholders to prioritize engaging local communities and vulnerable groups in the development of new solutions that are responsive to the needs of those affected most. We must intentionally involve all stakeholders, including women, girls, youth, persons with disabilities, indigenous people and other unrepresented groups, in disaster risk governance to ensure we leave no one behind. And as the midterm review states, where there is knowledge, courage and solidarity in the face of shared threats, there is opportunity. The United States pledges to continue investing in disaster risk reduction and strengthening its capacity-building partnerships worldwide. Together, through 2030 and beyond, we must continue to build on our commitment to advancing disaster risk reduction and increased resilience for all.

Mr. Seid (Ethiopia): At the outset, on my own behalf and that of my country, I would like to express my gratitude to the President for convening today's high-level meeting on the midterm review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. It is essential to enabling us to reflect on the findings and recommendations of the midterm review and design new paths that can help to accelerate the implementation of the Framework.

Ethiopia has made significant progress in disaster resilience efforts over the past eight years. We have aligned our policy with the Sendai Framework and the Programme of Action for its implementation in Africa. We have developed a variety of guidelines, tools, standard operating procedures and methods to ensure that disaster risk management is the business of every sector. We recently launched a multi-hazard, impact-based, early-warning and action road map that is

expected to transform our early-warning system in terms of modernization, interoperability and harmonization.

Furthermore, the country has completed a legal framework for ensuring accountability and a threshold-based disaster declaration and response system. Additionally, we have been able to collect and profile risks for more than 500 districts, on the basis of which we have developed disaster risk reduction and contingency plans for more than 400 districts. That has enabled us to respond to the recent coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the drought conditions in various parts of the nation, the humanitarian needs in northern Ethiopia and flooding.

Despite those efforts, Ethiopia is dealing with a plethora of humanitarian challenges, including conflict, desert locust invasions and climate shocks such as floods and droughts. Investments in disaster risk management have been primarily geared to responses rather than pre-disaster preventive measures. We therefore still need to increase our investment in pre-disaster activities if we are to better prepare for and mitigate disasters' effects. Furthermore, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as reduced financial support and large national trade deficits resulting in high inflation and currency devaluation, are exacerbating the challenges and have significantly increased Ethiopia's humanitarian needs. In order to close those gaps, it will be essential to focus on capacity-building in a variety of areas. Strengthening multi-hazard early-warning and action systems and disaster risk governance, as well as improving international cooperation and partnerships, will be paramount. Disaster risk management platforms must focus on prevention and disaster risk reduction rather than response.

Finally, my country is committed and looks forward to strengthening partnerships and collaborating with our partners, including the United Nations system, donors and implementing partners.

Mr. Kawol (Mauritius): At the outset, I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this very important high-level meeting on the midterm review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030.

We are gathered here under the theme "Working together to reduce risk for a resilient future," reflecting our collective commitment to addressing the challenges posed by disaster risks and strengthening our efforts to build resilient societies. As our nations strive to

chart liveable pathways for humans and nature through the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, integrating disaster risk reduction into our development agendas has become essential. Proactive measures to reduce risks can enhance resilience, protect lives and livelihoods and safeguard the environment.

Disaster risk reduction enables us to identify and mitigate hazards, strengthen early-warning systems, develop resilient infrastructure and promote sustainable land and water management practices. Through that holistic approach, countries can create a harmonious balance between human needs and nature's capacity to withstand and recover from disasters. By charting liveable pathways, they can build societies that thrive in harmony with nature, minimizing the risks posed by disasters and ensuring a sustainable future for generations to come. Mauritius acknowledges the significant progress that has been made since the adoption of the Sendai Framework in 2015. We recognize its importance in guiding our efforts to reduce disaster risks, enhance resilience and protect our communities, infrastructure and ecosystems. We commend the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and other stakeholders for their tireless efforts in facilitating the implementation and monitoring of the Sendai Framework.

As a small island developing State, Mauritius is acutely aware of the unique and intensified risks we face due to our geographic location and susceptibility to the effects of climate change, including sea level rise, high-intensity cyclones, heavy rains, flash floods, landslides, tsunamis and human-induced disasters. We have witnessed first-hand the devastating consequences of cyclones, floods and coastal erosion. We therefore remain steadfast in our commitment to implementing the Sendai Framework to protect our population and build a resilient future. Mauritius has made significant strides in implementing the Framework through comprehensive policies, institutional frameworks and investments in disaster risk reduction. We have strengthened our institutional capacities by establishing our National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Centre, which serves as a focal point for disaster management in our country. We have also prioritized the development of early-warning systems, resilient infrastructure, sustainable land and water management practices and community engagement. With the adoption of the Sendai Framework in 2015, Mauritius introduced its own legal framework for disaster risk

reduction, enacting a national disaster risk reduction and management act in 2016.

However, we acknowledge that considerable challenges persist. The effects of climate change continue to exacerbate existing risks, threatening our progress towards resilience. The coronavirus disease pandemic has also posed unforeseen challenges, disrupting our economies and straining our resources. We need renewed commitment and collaboration to address those challenges, with a focus on innovative financing mechanisms, technology transfer, capacity-building and knowledge-sharing. Mauritius calls for strengthened international cooperation and support, particularly for small island developing States, to enable the effective implementation of the Sendai Framework. We emphasize the importance of access to financial resources, technology and capacity-building opportunities to enhance our resilience and achieve the targets set forth in the Framework. Furthermore, we encourage the integration of disaster risk reduction into broader sustainable development agendas, recognizing the interconnected nature of these goals.

In conclusion, Mauritius reaffirms its commitment to working together with the international community to reduce disaster risk and build a resilient future. We believe that by aligning our efforts, sharing best practices and providing support to the most vulnerable, we can achieve the goals of the Sendai Framework and pave the way for a safer, more sustainable world. Let us seize this opportunity to recommit ourselves to the shared vision of reducing disaster risk, fostering resilience and creating a better future for all.

Mr. Mbuge (United Republic of Tanzania): On behalf of the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania, I would like to express my delegation's sincere appreciation to the President of the General Assembly and to the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction for the excellent organization of this high-level meeting.

I wish to affirm our commitment to the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. Further, we assure the General Assembly of our support for and intention to implement the political declaration adopted this morning (resolution 77/289), which is in the interests of our country and our people.

Based on our practical experience and as we have been informed through various scientific reports,

climate and weather-related hazards are increasing in frequency and intensity, exacerbating disasters risk and impeding progress towards sustainable development in our countries. Over the past seven years, the United Republic of Tanzania has made progress in the implementation of the Sendai Framework in various ways, including through the enactment of Disaster Management Act No. 6 of 2022 and its regulations, as well as the development of the National Disaster Management Strategy 2022–2027 and various sectoral plans and strategies. These initiatives consider the importance of rethinking and finding better ways to address systemic disaster risk through strengthening local, cross border, regional and global collaboration and cooperation.

On the implementation of the Sendai Framework, my delegation would like to emphasize the need to strengthen regional and international cooperation and technical and financial support for disaster risk profiling, early-warning systems and developing national and local strategies for disaster risk reduction.

In conclusion, let me take this opportunity to again assure the General Assembly that under the leadership of Her Excellency Ms. Samia Suluhu Hassan, President of the United Republic of Tanzania, we will continue to build a disaster-resilient nation, while contributing to regional and global exchanges, facilitation and promotion of disaster reduction and adaptation to climate change.

Mr. Al-Mekrad (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to all the officials of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) for their ongoing support towards strengthening the measures for disaster risk reduction and follow-up on implementing the Sendai Framework.

We had the privilege to participate in the third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, which was held in Sendai, Japan, in March 2015, in the course of which the Sendai Disaster Risk Reduction Framework was adopted. Subsequently, in January 2017, the State of Kuwait collaborated with the UNDRR and provided all the requisite resources to clear away the obstacles impeding the implementation of the goals and the requirements of the Sendai Framework in the State of Kuwait.

Everyone is well aware that disaster management and risk reduction are purely humanitarian in

nature. Notwithstanding our cooperation with the UNDRR, the State of Kuwait has not hesitated to support all humanitarian efforts throughout the world. Accordingly, the State of Kuwait has, through specialized teams, provided assistance to countries facing forest fires resulting from climate change and elevated temperatures. We have also provided equipment and machineries to fight fires in the friendly Republics of Türkiye and Greece, as well as in sisterly Algeria and Tunisia, in addition to providing assistance and participating in specialized teams for search-and-rescue operations following the recent earthquake that struck Türkiye. We were able to do that thanks to an approach comprising the wise political leadership and the good Government of the State of Kuwait. To that end, all our specialized cadres participated and a road map for humanitarian work was elaborated.

As for the most important actions undertaken by the State of Kuwait to achieve the goals of the Sendai Framework, we have raised awareness about the Framework at the national level by convening meetings and workshops in collaboration with the UNDRR. Most governmental bodies and Kuwaiti stakeholders have participated in those events. In order to evaluate our work and identify the gaps and the needs in terms of risk reduction in the State of Kuwait, we collaborated with the UNDRR in organizing a consultative workshop in July 2022, with more than 100 participants representing more than 32 governmental and non-governmental bodies, stakeholders and civil society.

As for the progress made in risk evaluation, the State of Kuwait has made substantial progress. In April 2018, in collaboration with the UNDRR, a special workshop involving various State entities prepared a comprehensive matrix of risks for the State of Kuwait with each entity contributing according to its specialty.

With regard to the progress made in ensuring preparedness for disasters and addressing them in a way that leads to better reconstruction, the midterm report noted improvement in the level of preparedness and response to disasters, as well as recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction in the State of Kuwait since the adoption of Sendai Framework. A national committee has been established to follow-up on the implementation of the Framework by all relevant State entities. The committee will implement all the recommendations pertaining to Sendai Framework.

We are pleased to announce that the political leadership of the State of Kuwait has agreed to host the Sixth Arab Partnership Meeting for Disaster Risk Reduction in 2024. We are honoured to be supportive of the requirements for reducing and mitigating disaster effects.

In conclusion, we wish everyone success in reducing the risk of disasters and mitigating their effects and repercussions on human beings, property and the environment. We also wish to establish the best means to achieve sustainable development. We ask God to save everybody from the scourge of disasters and their consequences.

Mr. Nassir (Morocco) (*spoke in Arabic*): By virtue of its geography and geologic composition, the Kingdom of Morocco, like many countries, is vulnerable to extreme natural phenomena resulting from climate change and other causes. Our country has had to face many natural disasters, such as floods, droughts, forest fires, earthquakes and landslides, which have usually led to loss of life and property. Some examples of that are the devastating earthquakes and severe floods that the Kingdom experienced.

As such, the speech delivered by His Majesty King Mohammed VI on 25 March 2004 in the wake of the devastating earthquake that struck the city of Al Hoceima was a turning point that highlighted the need to develop our capabilities in tracking and forecasting and our preventive capabilities, as well as to move beyond the traditional perspective based on a reactive and crisis-management approach and replace it with a visionary and integrated approach.

As a result, the Kingdom of Morocco has worked to establish institutional governance to manage disaster risk, in particular through the creation of a natural disaster fund and a programme for the integrated management of natural disaster risk and enhanced resilience. That includes promoting measurement and forecasting systems as well as enhancing early-warning systems. From 2015 to date, more than 277 preventive projects have been financed, at a total cost of more than \$400 million, a third of which was provided by the disaster fund.

In line with the objectives of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Kingdom of Morocco adopted a national strategy to manage the risks of natural disasters from 2020 to 2030 and is currently

implementing the provisions and actions pursuant to that strategy.

In order to coordinate Government disaster risk-management policies, a special directorate for the management of natural risks was created at the level of the Ministry of the Interior. That directorate enhances sectoral coordination and supervises the implementation of the national strategy.

In addition, the Kingdom of Morocco has undertaken several measures, in line with the new law on water, in order to create a map of flood-prone areas and prevention plans, develop a prediction and early-warning system for rainstorms and establish committees to manage and track flood events at the national, regional and local levels.

As a result of the human and material losses and their high costs resulting from disasters and since the harmful occurrence of disasters cannot be avoided, the Kingdom of Morocco has established a system to cover the costs of consequences of catastrophes through a dual system of compensation, comprised of an insurance system for the victims who are insured and a solidarity system for those who are not insured, funded by the solidarity fund against catastrophes and disasters.

Within the framework of facing the coronavirus disease pandemic and under the leadership and directives of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, necessary measures have been taken to prevent the spread of the pandemic and mitigate its social and economic repercussions, including the establishment of a consultative scientific committee to support and complement existing hospitals with fully equipped field hospitals and the launching of a national vaccination campaign free of charge for the benefit of all citizens and residents. A special fund was also established to address the pandemic and its impacts.

The Kingdom of Morocco hosted the Fifth Arab Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in 2021. That clearly reflects our strong and serious commitment to implementing our international obligations. Through the Rabat Declaration, the forum's outcome document, the Arab countries underscored the need to accelerate the implementation of the objectives and priorities of the Sendai Framework.

We congratulate ourselves today for the adoption of that political declaration, and we reaffirm our commitment in that regard. The Kingdom of Morocco

emphasizes that it is fully engaged in the efforts of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction to continue and accelerate the implementation of the Sendai Framework. My country is also engaged, with our Arab brothers, in the implementation of the Arab Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction 2030. In addition, we will strengthen South-South cooperation with our African brothers, whom we highly value, in response to the royal directives in that regard, and will accelerate the implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Due to time constraints, we will hand over a full copy of our statement to the Secretariat.

Mr. Al-Khalifa (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): I have the pleasure of expressing my sincere gratitude for the efforts of the United Nations and its specialized bodies to promote international cooperation and achieve peace, security, development and prosperity for all the peoples of the world. I want to assure the Assembly that the Kingdom of Bahrain is determined to continue contributing to the United Nations activities and supporting its efforts for the good of every country on the planet.

Thanks to the royal directives of His Majesty the King and the efforts of the Government under the leadership of His Royal Highness the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, Bahrain continues to take steps to fulfil its aspirations for development through its national strategy to reduce disaster risk, in accordance with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. We have also created a mechanism for analysing and managing risk in accordance with the measures endorsed by the United Nations.

In response to United Nations efforts within the Sendai Framework, Bahrain established a national civil defence council, which was recently reorganized under the leadership of the Minister of the Interior, bringing together other ministries and bodies involved in risk management, disasters and emergency situations. The council also oversees the development of policies to ensure effective disaster and crisis responses, with a view to managing them effectively and taking the necessary measures to ensure recovery. Some 78 per cent of the targets have been incorporated into the Government's action plan. The Ministries and other stakeholders have also been encouraged to include them in their respective plans and programmes. The Government has adopted many programmes, plans and

legislation needed to reduce risks and has implemented a national risk-reduction strategy under which we have set up a detailed register of risk indicators at the national level that is updated on a regular basis.

Every sector of the Government of Bahrain has participated in developing prevention plans and conducting joint national exercises with the private sector and civil-society organizations in order to ensure that all the Sendai Framework objectives are implemented in the next three years. We are working on creating a national platform to raise awareness, involve civil society in the Government's efforts and foster the principle of communal partnership for risk and disaster reduction.

The Kingdom of Bahrain understands that achieving the targets of the Sendai Framework requires a collective effort and international commitment, with the constructive cooperation and partnership of all countries. We call for setting up an effective emergency system at the international level, since the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has demonstrated that threats to humankind come not just from weapons but include unforeseeable problems that are beyond our control. We reaffirm the importance of establishing national centres to follow up on meeting the targets of the Sendai Framework, in addition to setting up regional offices to create the necessary mechanisms for monitoring, coordination and training in support of the most vulnerable developing countries. That will promote regional cooperation and international partnerships through capacity-building, the effective allocation of resources and exchanges of best practices.

In conclusion, we wish this meeting every success and hope its outcome will be productive and constructive.

Mr. Smith (Bahamas): The Commonwealth of the Bahamas aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representative of Saint Lucia on behalf of the Caribbean Community (see A/77/PV.71) and to be delivered on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States.

The Bahamas has fallen off track in implementing the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, owing to global shocks and slow progress in the multilateral system in addressing issues of climate change that have had a disproportionate effect on the Bahamas and other small island developing States (SIDS) by comparison to developed States.

The Bahamas remains hopeful that the global climate agenda will become more action-oriented and can fully address our critical concerns, such as reforming the outdated international financial architecture, in order to better reflect today's realities, provide robust access to climate-change-specific funding to mitigate loss and damage and increase capacity-building in science, including the transfer of technology.

The Bahamas strongly encourages timely consultations on the Multidimensional Vulnerability Index for Small Island Developing States and the Bridgetown Initiative, which are essential tools in helping to improve the Bahamas' development capacity. While there is much work to be done on Priorities 1, 3 and 4 of the Sendai Framework, the Bahamas has made significant progress on Priority 2. We advanced recommendations for policy reform, including by enacting a new legal framework in December 2022, the Disaster Risk Management Act. We are in the process of drafting policy instruments for its effective and efficient implementation. Our Index of Governance and Public Policy score improved from 22 per cent in 2020 to 38 per cent in 2022, making the Bahamas a leader in disaster risk management governance in the Caribbean.

We thank the Pacific Disaster Center, which, through the University of Hawaii, executed a memorandum of understanding with the University of the Bahamas to advance training and research on disaster risk management. As a member State of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency, we recognize the strategic value of the Regional Comprehensive Disaster Management Strategy and Programming Framework 2014–2024 for the implementation of the Sendai Framework. The Comprehensive Disaster Management Strategy remains relevant and supports advancing international, regional and national developmental priorities in disaster risk management.

The Bahamas supports the political declaration (resolution 77/289) to renew our global commitment and accelerate the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Mr. Ovink (Kingdom of the Netherlands): On a personal note, the third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, at which we agreed on the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, was my first mission eight years ago as the then recently reappointed Special Envoy, and

I have been with the Framework for the past eight and a half years. This meeting is taking place at a defining moment, accelerating action towards the radical transformations that we need to mitigate and reduce climate and water risks and make our world more safe, more healthy, just and prosperous in an inclusive as well as resilient manner.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands would like to thank Indonesia and Australia for their great leadership in facilitating the political declaration of the midterm review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (resolution 77/289). We welcome the declaration and align ourselves with the statement made on behalf of the European Union.

Just eight weeks after the United Nations 2023 Water Conference, we come together again here in New York. The third interactive dialogue, championed by the Governments of Japan and Egypt, brought forward the important interlinkages between water, climate and disasters and the need for early warning, preparedness and bold action on both climate mitigation and adaptation, all with water at their core. During the closing session of the Conference, Secretary-General Guterres concluded that water should be at the centre of the global political agenda. It is regrettable that we did not take this opportunity in the context of the midterm review of the Sendai Framework to work together to further strengthen the language on water as a lever for sustainable development and for building resilience to disasters and the impacts of climate change. We need to be continually committed to putting water at centre stage and making the advancement of the implementation of the Water Action Agenda a priority.

As affirmed by the Global Commission on the Economics of Water, our collective actions have pushed our water cycle out of balance. That cycle must be acknowledged as a global common good. The destruction of nature and our biodiversity, exacerbated by climate change, is leading to a frightening growth of water-related disasters. In its most recent report the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change issued a stronger warning to humankind. Rising sea levels, increased water scarcity, droughts and floods are the new reality all over the world, and billions of people are suffering from their impact. We can no longer ignore the world's water crisis. If we do not solve our water issues, we will fail on climate action and on the delivery of all the Sustainable Development Goals.

A safe, healthy, just and prosperous future can be achieved. It requires the protection and restoration of our ecosystems, scaled investment in people's capacity and a radical change in how we manage and value water. And we can do that only by investing together in water, sanitation, hygiene and early warning for all, and by investing in restoring ecosystems and in data, knowledge-sharing and the necessary capacity. That is why the Kingdom of the Netherlands launched the International Panel on Deltas, Coastal Areas and Islands during the United Nations Water Conference to support Governments in drawing up their own national adaptation plans and sharing knowledge for better disaster prevention and preparedness in the future.

That is also why we are investing in and cooperating with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, the World Meteorological Organization, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre to prevent and mitigate the impacts of water-related risks, starting in East Africa, in a unique partnership combining the best available data, science and early-warning systems with locally led adaptation action on the ground. Now, we have the opportunity and the responsibility to secure the outcomes and commitments of the Water Conference, which will help ensure resilience and disaster risk reduction.

Investing in water is investing in disaster risk reduction for a safe, healthy, just and prosperous world. Water should be at the centre of the global political agenda. We really need to integrate water into the Sendai Framework. There is no future without water security.

Mr. Ahmed (Nigeria): Nigeria aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Cuba, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and South Africa, on behalf of the Group of African States. My delegation welcomes the convening of today's very important meeting and would like to add some remarks in our national capacity.

We acknowledge the United Nations efforts in implementing the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction despite many challenges, including the effects of the coronavirus disease. We emphasize the need for governance, transformation and cross-sectoral collaboration in disaster risk management.

Nigeria is facing many vulnerabilities such as flooding, erosion and climate-change-induced disasters. The 2022 floods, which were unprecedented in our

history, affected more than 4 million people, displacing more than 2 million and resulting in approximately 665 deaths and extensive damage and destruction to nearly 360,000 houses and 1 million hectares of farmland nationwide. It is also worth pointing out that early warnings indicate high flood risks for 2023.

To address those challenges, Nigeria has established a presidential committee for developing a comprehensive plan of action for preventing flood disaster in Nigeria. The plan is to integrate structural and non-structural measures, ecosystem needs and stakeholder coordination. As an early-warning document, our National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) launched our 2023 climate-related disaster preparedness and mitigation strategies with the aim of safeguarding infrastructure and the environment from climatic hazards. We are actively working on disaster risk reduction priorities, organizing platforms to evaluate the state of disaster risk reduction and enhancing early-warning systems. Furthermore, NEMA, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) under the Sahel Resilience Project, has conducted a series of workshops on the establishment of a national disaster database and risk-informed development in Nigeria. In addition, we have made appreciable efforts to realize the four priorities and seven targets of the Sendai Framework. We have organized national and subnational platforms across the country, which is an important integral part of achieving progress in the country's drive towards subnational-level implementation of the protocols of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. In collaboration with the African Union Commission, UNDP and the Economic Commission of West African States, we have also appointed a consultant for developing a national disaster risk reduction strategy.

Nigeria has made appreciable progress, despite facing several other national and regional disasters with sudden onsets. We should note that following the recent crisis that erupted in the Sudan, the Federal Government of Nigeria successfully evacuated 2,531 Nigerians, primarily students at various Sudanese institutions, and brought them home in a safe and dignified manner. There were no reported casualties or major injuries during the entire operation. Another 241 students have been identified and relocated to Port Sudan for subsequent evacuation back to Nigeria.

In conclusion, the support of the United Nations in training, early-warning systems and risk analysis for

the development of resilience strategies is crucial, and we appreciate its assistance in monitoring the Sendai Framework and promoting global best practices in disaster risk reduction.

Mrs. Uprety (Nepal): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the least developed countries (LDCs).

As the most vulnerable group of nations, LDCs are especially exposed to crises and shocks, including health epidemics, commodity price shocks, economic crises, natural disasters and extreme weather events. Those shocks halt the pace of sustainable development, exacerbate poverty and undermine the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals. Against that backdrop, the importance for the LDCs of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction can hardly be overstated.

While progress has been made towards realizing the Sendai Framework priorities, it is not consistent across countries. The unique challenges that LDCs face, such as resource and capacity constraints, continue to hinder the realization of the Framework's outcomes and goals. For instance, only 61 per cent of LDCs have reported the development of national disaster risk reduction strategies.

From 2012 to 2021, disaster mortality rates averaged 1.28 annually per 100,000 inhabitants in LDCs, compared to the global average of 0.84 per 100,000 inhabitants. In 2019, LDCs recorded more than 40 per cent of deaths and missing persons and 48 per cent of persons with livelihoods disrupted or destroyed, despite accounting for only 18 per cent of the total population of countries reporting. They also suffered 17 per cent of economic losses and 14 per cent of all destruction or damage to critical infrastructure, despite accounting for only 1 per cent of the gross domestic product of countries reporting.

In 2022, only 46 per cent of LDCs reported having multi-hazard early-warning systems in place. While an unprecedented number of 16 LDCs are in the graduation pipeline, those countries have persistently high levels of economic and environmental vulnerability. In that context, we call for concrete financial and technological support for LDCs to make progress across the Sendai priorities. The graduating LDCs will also require adequate support measures to address disaster risk and implement smooth transition strategies so as to make their graduation sustainable and irreversible.

We welcome the adoption of the Doha Programme of Action for the LDCs for the Decade 2022–2031, which makes a significant advancement towards a risk-informed approach to development. With resilience-building and risk reduction as its guiding principles, disaster risk reduction is mainstreamed across the Doha Programme of Action as a key enabler of sustainable development. We therefore call for the rapid implementation of the Doha Programme of Action, especially its provisions on disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation.

Furthermore, we welcome the Secretary-General's Early Warnings for All initiative, which was launched at the twenty-seventh Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and is aimed at ensuring universal coverage of early warnings by 2027. While welcoming the inclusion of 19 LDCs for priority action during the first phase, we encourage the initiative to prioritize the inclusion of additional LDCs over time.

We also welcome the political declaration of the high-level meeting on the midterm review of the Sendai Framework (resolution 77/289), which acknowledges that additional support is needed for LDCs, in particular for the provision of adequate, sustainable and timely means of implementation through capacity-building, financial and technical assistance and the transfer of technology. The political declaration also notes the detrimental impact of disasters on debt sustainability, the importance of investments that contribute to the reduction of disaster risk and the need to urgently extend the reach of multi-hazard early-warning systems.

In conclusion, we underscore that the political declaration must lead to concrete action to remedy the gaps identified by the Sendai Framework midterm review process. We emphasize that international cooperation and innovative disaster risk reduction financing mechanisms are crucial to create an enabling environment for effective disaster risk reduction and adaptation measures.

Mr. Dabutha (Botswana): I am delighted to deliver this statement on behalf of the States members of the group of landlocked developing countries (LLDCs).

Our group of countries welcomes this opportunity for all of us to reflect on how we can better chart liveable pathways for humans and nature, especially in the midst of growing challenges, including climate change, the coronavirus disease and other shocks.

As we draw closer to the 2030 milestones for the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals, we reiterate the importance of fostering synergies and coherence with other development processes, including the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and other frameworks and conventions in order to ensure that we leave no one behind.

LLDCs are characterized by structural vulnerabilities and limited productive capacities that expose them disproportionately to negative disasters. Those challenges impose profound economic and social barriers on our economies. For instance, data reported by our countries to the Sendai Framework monitor shows that, over the past 10 years, direct economic losses due to disasters averaged over 3 per cent of the gross domestic product of LLDCs compared to the global average of around 1 per cent. We are therefore of the view that it is critical to ensure that, as we walk towards liveable pathways, we mobilize investments in LLDCs based on a multi-hazard risk approach to ensure resilience to current and future shocks.

While we continue to make progress in the implementation of the Sendai Framework, it is concerning that a third of our countries do not have national disaster risk reduction strategies nor adequate access to early-warning systems. Furthermore, LLDCs continue to face numerous domestic financing challenges and require special attention to ensure sufficient and sustainable resources, as well as the capacity to address disaster risk reduction and build resilience and responsiveness to disasters.

Far greater attention is also needed with regard to nature-based solutions for disaster risk reduction that

can bring mutual benefits to ecosystems while also strengthening livelihoods and reducing disaster risk. LLDCs need support to enhance disaster risk reduction and to strengthen integrated disaster risk prevention, preparedness and response, as well as early-warning and early-action systems. That support can come through as financial assistance, technical assistance, capacity-building and technology transfer. Furthermore, we call upon development partners to support efforts by LLDCs and transit countries to address transboundary risk and to build resilient infrastructure that is regionally integrated, sustainable and climate- and disaster-resilient.

We acknowledge the Sendai Framework as an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024. We therefore remain committed to its four main priorities to safeguard against multiple catastrophes and build resilience in LLDCs.

Lastly, as we move closer to the third United Nations Conference on LLDCs, we count on members' support to build risk reduction and resilience priorities specific to LLDCs in the next programme of action. With that, I wish to invite members to the Risk Reduction Hub event on scaling up resilience-building and disaster risk reduction in LLDCs, which will take place tomorrow, 19 May, at 1.15 p.m. in conference room 8.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): We have heard the last speaker in this high-level meeting. In the light of the lateness of the hour, I shall now suspend the high-level meeting, to be resumed on 31 May 2023 to hear the remaining speakers for the plenary segment. The programme for the meeting will be announced in *The Journal of the United Nations*.

The meeting was suspended at 9 p.m.