

The 13th ASEAN and Japan High Level Officials Meeting  
on Caring Societies, October 20-22, 2015  
Recommendations

**Preamble**

- We, the participants representing the health, social welfare and labour sectors of the ASEAN plus Three countries, along with international, regional and related organizations and partners, at the 13th ASEAN and Japan High Level Officials Meeting on Caring Societies (hereafter referred to as the Meeting) held in Kobe, Japan on October 20-22, 2015, under the theme, “People-Centered Disaster Risk Reduction and Restoration”;
- Appreciating the continued initiative taken by the Government of Japan to hold these annual Meetings since 2003, and acknowledge that this 13th Meeting serves as an effective platform to share information and exchange views about the roles of stakeholders in public health, social welfare and labour sectors to improve people-centered disaster risk reduction and restoration in the ASEAN region;
- Welcoming the achievements of the 3rd United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction hosted by Japan last March 2015 in Sendai, that was shared during discussions in the Meeting;
- Acknowledging that, despite the difference of types and scales in the disasters they are faced with, ASEAN Member Countries and Japan share people-centered risk reduction and restoration as a common and valuable approach to tackling these issues;
- Further acknowledging that each stakeholder in the community, including women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons, have specific needs in time of disasters that should be properly addressed while taking into account their active roles in building disaster resilient communities;
- Recognizing that damage from disasters in one country or area can impact the industry and labour markets of other countries and note the importance to enhance the scope of disaster management to wider areas;

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- Stressing the need for and value of cross-sectoral collaboration amongst different sectors, departments or ministries within government, levels of government, professions, and across countries to enhance disaster preparedness, response and recovery;
- Noting the ASEAN Leaders through the “ASEAN Declaration on Enhancing Cooperation in Disaster Management” issued at the 23<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN Summit in October 2013 encouraged a joint effort and more integrated coordination and synergy in Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) among the various ASEAN-related mechanisms including the establishment of the Joint Task Force to Promote Synergy with Other Relevant ASEAN Bodies on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (JTF-HADR);
- Further welcoming the initiatives of moving towards ***“One ASEAN, One Response: ASEAN Responding to Disasters as One”***.

### **Agreements**

We, the participants of the Meeting have agreed:

- The proceedings and outcomes of this 13th Meeting should be reported to the respective Ministers and other Senior Officials in each country;
- Japan, with the support of the ASEAN Secretariat, should report the proceedings and outcomes of this meeting to the ASEAN+3 Health Ministers and Senior Officials Meetings on Health Development (AHMM+3, SOMHD+3), ASEAN+3 Ministers and Senior Officials Meetings on Social Welfare and Development (AMMSWD+3, SOMSWD+3) and ASEAN+3 Labour Ministers and Senior Officials Meetings (ALMM+3, SLOM+3).
- The ASEAN Secretariat will also facilitate the reporting of the outcomes of this meeting to the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM).

### **Recommendations**

We call upon all participants to:

1. Acknowledge that when faced with a disaster, every affected individual faces vulnerabilities. As such, preparedness as well as measures for response and recovery from disasters should be addressed taking into account, and

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involving the participation of, the specific situation and needs of women and those who tend to face particular vulnerabilities, including children, older persons, and persons with disabilities;

2. Recognize the value of disaster risk management approaches for all types of hazards.
3. Further reinforce health emergency preparedness, systems and plans so that they are in place to provide possible initial responses to save peoples' lives in disasters and to ensure health and wellbeing of survivors of disasters;
4. Improve capacity building through adaptation of technical guidelines, practical training, implementation of the IHR core capacities;
5. Strengthen cooperation among public and private sectors, NGOs, volunteers, academia and any other related stakeholders to improve disaster preparedness, response, and recovery, and support for the affected people, including through assessing disaster risk, stockpiling essential products to address disasters, considering evacuation plans, engaging communities, and building capacity of leaders in communities at emergency situation;
6. Work to establish and reinforce national disaster health risk management, including through the implementation of the International Health Regulations (2005) and ensuring basic functioning of health systems through universal health coverage, to enhance preparedness in ordinary times, conduct risk assessment, and improve response in emergency times;
7. Note providing decent work and sustainable jobs to people affected, including people with disability are essential for recovery from disasters;
8. Recognize that the post-disaster phase provides an opportunity to implement measures that can help countries and regions become more resilient to disasters including through building back better, developing infrastructure for disaster risk reduction, and considering investment for infrastructure restoration with view to create and support employment in the damaged areas;
9. Improve capacity building of a broad range of stakeholders, not limited to

governmental organizations, related to disaster management including NGOs, volunteers and communities, and furthermore, to increase communities' awareness of disaster risk and its capacity to manage. When developing and evaluating a plan to tackle disasters, past experience in managing disasters should be recalled and used well for it, applying lessons for "Build Back Better";

10. Recognize that because economic linkages, climate change and rapid urbanization have proceeded in the ASEAN region, the damage caused by and impact of disasters can be magnified in many countries. Therefore, efforts that reach beyond borders are essential for disaster risk reduction, preparedness, response and recovery;
11. Enhance sharing of knowledge, experiences, technological and social innovations across countries related to public health, social welfare and labour for disaster preparedness, management, and response, as well as facilitating cross-sectoral collaboration, among the ASEAN Member States, Japan, ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance (AHA Centre), WHO, ILO, JICA, Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC), ADB, and any other related international and regional organizations and partners;
12. Support the implementation of global development agenda such as Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Sustainable Development Goals that are reinforcing with ASEAN's one response to disasters.