

**Remarks by the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister and
Minister Mr. Kamal Thapa, as Co-Chair of the High-
Level Leaders' Roundtable on "Natural Disaster and
Climate Change: Managing Risks & Crises Differently"**
(24 May 2016)

Fellow co-chairs,

Moderators,

I wish to thank the Secretary-General for convening the Summit and outlining the objectives and modalities of this round table. Thank you also Mr. Secretary-General for this honour given to Nepal.

I deal on the theme representing one of the mountain countries of the world that is most vulnerable to climate change and disasters. I also share the lessons that we have learned following the devastating Nepal earthquakes last year.

In Nepal, increased adverse impacts of climate change on environment, weather patterns, water availability, physical infrastructure, agriculture, forestry, bio-diversity and socio-economic activities, among others, have led to serious humanitarian consequences. This has dragged the lives and livelihoods of millions of people into more difficulty every year.

Floods, landslides, earthquakes and fire hazards are major incidences of disasters that periodically hit one or the other part of our country. The mutually exacerbating impacts of climate change and disasters make the situation more complicated.

Drawing lessons from our experiences, I can share with you the following points on dealing with climate change and disasters:

1. Putting in place effective policy, strategy, legal and institutional mechanism is a very important step towards ensuring a consistent framework for climate action and multistakeholder partnership at the national, regional and international levels. In Nepal, we have a National Adaptation Plan of Action, a Local Adaptation Plan of Action, environmental and climate policies and programmes as well as Environment and Climate Change Councils at the highest level to muster political will in this area.
2. Mobilization of local community in adaptation and mitigation measures can bear meaningful results. But for more innovative problem-solving and resilience building, an easy access to affordable technology is necessary. Attention should be paid to more public financing for adaptation activities, and leveraging

public and private partnerships for mitigation measures.

3. Improvement of livelihood opportunities of poor farmers through careful utilization of ecosystem services.
4. Development and promotion of alternative and sustainable energy sources.
5. Fostering green growth strategies based on locally available resources.
6. The Himalayan region lacks science-based knowledge and data that can be applied to mitigate climate change and disasters, develop an early warning system and disaster preparedness, promote innovation, and build resilience. We therefore need support to establish a Climate Research Centre in our country. We believe that this would prove useful for over a billion people living in the upstream as well as downstream areas, and in consolidating the sustainability of ecosystem services.

7. We emphasize the implementation of the Kathmandu Call for Action, 2012 for healthy ecosystem and people-centric development in the larger framework of SDGs.
8. No society or nation keeps capability to tackle mega disasters alone. Dealing with big disasters call for institutional capacity-building for resilience not only at the local and national levels, but also at regional and international levels. We await the creation of a sound architecture for global synergy of efforts backed up by identified institutional mechanisms.
9. Build back better for increased resilience at the community level to ensure quick response and avoidance of bigger losses of life and property when disasters strike.
10. Build back better calls for increased financial resources, application of technology suitable to the local situation, and increased innovation.
11. More smart and coordinated support for rescue, rehabilitation and recovery efforts is called for. Massive emotional outpouring and subsequent

voluntary contributions of individual and institutional donors across the globe come in the name of the disaster victims, but mechanisms are lacking for ensuring transparency and accountability in the transfer of such funds to the disaster hit countries and people.

12. We emphasize that money raised through donations be delivered through the national government system to make holistic impacts. This will ensure equity and justice in distribution, while also avoiding skewed choice and unnecessary fragmentation of efforts.
13. Rescue and rehabilitation supports alone are not enough in disaster-hit areas suffering from massive poverty. Continuous supports are necessary until the reconstruction and rebuilding tasks are accomplished along the principles established by Sendai framework for DRR.
14. Humanitarian assistance should be guided by total dedication, not by petty interest or profit motive.

In the face of massive disaster, we experienced that we were not alone. We saw first hand how a collective resolve to work in solidarity, with pools of resources and capacities is the best way to face such challenges which cannot be tackled alone.[⊕] I believe this is where lies the importance of core commitments that we are asked to pledge at this Summit. Nepal would be very happy if my thoughts would be useful to Member countries.

⊕ Preparedness is important to minimize risk and damage.