

**Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction
Geneva, 5-7 June 2007**

**Side-Event on Drought Risk Reduction: Networking and Partnership Opportunities
(5 June 2007)**

Inputs from the Government of Kenya, National Focal Point and Deputy Secretary &
Coordinator, National Platform on Disaster Reduction, Office of the President, Ministry of State
for Special Programmes,
Mr Moses Gitari

1. Distinguished Delegates; Ladies and Gentleman:
2. It is truly an honour to address all of you on the most crucial disaster for Kenya in terms of deaths: DROUGHT.
3. According to the National Strategy on Disaster risk Reduction, the “2006 drought affected 37 out of 78 districts with a total population of 3.5 million people left in dire need of relief. About 40 people, mostly children, died due to complications arising from malnutrition”.
4. Drought has been with us since time immemorial. However, history has not thought us to live with the RISKS related to DROUGHT. We have not built the resilience of all our people, particularly those at risk (pastoral and agro-pastoral drylands communities). And we need focus our attention on building our capacities to deal with the risks associated with drought instead of responding to situations of crisis.
5. With the Hyogo Framework for Action adopted in 1995, we have taken a significant set of action for its implementation. I would like to highlight some of them.
6. Our Government, under the leadership of the Office of the President, Ministry of State for Special Programmes, has achieved the following main results:
 - a) We have drafted a National Strategy on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2006 which is now awaiting Cabinet’s approval;
 - b) The Office of the President has established an effective National Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction which is headed by a National Focal Point;
 - c) At regional and global level we have also played a significant role. We have for instance hosted a number of strategic meetings for Africa such as: the 1st Africa Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction, several Regional workshops on Tsunami-related issues, a number of meetings on climate change outlook, and many others.
7. In relation to DROUGHT RISK REDUCTION, in late 2006 we hosted together with UN/ISDR, ICPAC and governments of the Horn of Africa the inception workshop for the “SIDA-Funded Project on strengthening coordination and harmonising policies on Drought Risk Reduction in the Horn of Africa”.
8. Under this project, we have held consultations with communities of Kajiado (a region heavily affected by drought) to assess traditional knowledge and communication methods on climate prediction.

9. We have also recently held a National Meeting of Experts on Drought Risk Reduction which saw the participation of over 30 representatives from different Government agencies, NGOs, bilateral and multilateral donors, Media and Academia.
10. This Meeting had very concrete results. We agreed on a roadmap for reviewing and strengthening existing policies and programmes on DROUGHT RISK REDUCTION into a single common Policy Framework and Action Plan. We also agreed to meet and coordinate the different related activities more frequently and effectively.
11. In the next quarter, we intend to undertake a root-cause analysis of DROUGHT in Kenya, identify and map the RISKS associated with drought, carry out a capacity assessment of communities and key Government agencies, and define priority areas of intervention. This study aims to harmonise the different policy frameworks and programmes on DROUGHT RISK REDUCTION in the country. Our aim is also to strengthen and promote existing coordination mechanisms.
12. In addition, we also wish to continue to promote knowledge-sharing on DROUGHT RISK REDUCTION in the Horn of Africa, Africa and globally.
13. In all our different partnerships and activities on Drought Risk Reduction, particularly in relation to the SIDA-Funded Project in the Horn of Africa, we are very grateful for the ongoing support and collaboration that has developed with UN/ISDR Africa and Swedish SIDA. We are also wish to thank ICPAC (IGAD) and UN system agencies in Kenya. We will pursue these partnerships with a view to increase our common impact in the area of Drought Risk Reduction in Kenya and the sub-region.
14. Thank you for your kind attention.