**Address by Mr. Anura Priyadharshana Yapa**

**Honourable Minister of Disaster Management, Sri Lanka**

**at the Global Platform 2017**

Excellencies, Heads of Delegations, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Government of Sri Lanka is pleased to be a part of this Global Platform. Two years after the adoption of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, it is an appropriate time for all of us to revisit the progress we have made so far in achieving our own commitments to the Sendai Framework and also to share ideas and best practices to streamline the implementation of the Sendai Framework in our countries.

I would like to take this opportunity to re-confirm the commitment of the Government of Sri Lanka to achieve the targets of the Sendai Framework. We are continuing the progress we have made during the HFA period by taking a number of new measures to shift our focus from managing disasters to managing disaster risks.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As an island nation, Sri Lanka is facing intensified challenges due to climate-related hazards. During the last two years, Sri Lanka has experienced devastating floods, landslides, and droughts. Damages and economic losses caused by these disasters have exceeded US $1 billion. The Ministry of Disaster Management has seriously considered the increasing trend of disasters and has collaborated with all ministries to implement medium and long-term disaster risk reduction programmes in line with the Sendai priorities to minimise casualties, damages to infrastructure, and economic losses.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since the adoption of the Sendai Framework, the Ministry of Disaster Management in consultation with relevant stakeholders, has identified national targets and prepared a National Action Plan to implement the Sendai Framework. The regional action plan for Asia & the Pacific, which was compiled based on national action plans including that of Sri Lanka, was endorsed by the Government of Sri Lanka, during the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Delhi, in 2016. Sri Lanka has already taken measures to translate salient points of the Framework into our local languages, and conducted a series of awareness programmes at national and sub-national levels. Our aim is to disseminate the key Sendai messages to the most-vulnerable, with specific focus to school community.

Capturing the achievement and gaps in implementing the Hyogo Framework, we have prepared the Country Status Report and identified the baseline for Sendai indicators. Sri Lanka was represented in the Open-ended intergovernmental expert group to develop global indicators and was pleased to take part in the feasibility study initiated by the Government of Japan to identify the availability of data for indicators. Sri Lanka also made measures to complete the Country Readiness Report.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

After the devastating floods and landslides in May 2016, my Ministry led a Post-Disaster Needs Assessment, which was supported by the World Bank, European Union, and United Nations to identify damages, losses and the recovery needs. The figures discovered by the PDNA were alarmingly high. The damages and losses exceeded US $660 million. With the increase of unpredictable extreme weather events, these figures could be the new normal for countries like ours. In 2016, Sri Lanka established a web-based damage and loss assessment system, which will strengthen the existing Desinventar information system and enable Sendai reporting.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our Government is in the process of developing the next National Disaster Risk Management Plan, giving due consideration to recommendations of the PDNA and National Action Plan for Sendai Framework. The Government has also committed funds to develop risk profiles for frequently-occurring hazards aiming to obtain risk information by 2020. The Government has already taken measures to introduce a risk transfer mechanism through the National Insurance Trust Fund to insure the residual risks.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Challenges faced by us in implementing the Sendai Framework are still enormous. Inadequate capacity of development agencies on risk-sensitive development could easily hamper our efforts in reducing disaster risks. Increased international cooperation for knowledge sharing and capacity building is thus important to achieve the Sendai targets.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the government of Mexico, members of the organising committee and UNISDR for making arrangements to successfully conduct this conference.

Thank you.