I would like to begin by thanking the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) and the Government of Indonesia for organizing and hosting such an important event. Even though I am unable to be there in person, I am pleased to deliver this message on an issue that is at the very core of the Italian humanitarian and development action. Since 2019 to date, the Italian Cooperation approved more than 158 million euro of projects with activities classified as DRR-related [according to the OECD-DAC policy marker system].

It is significant that such an important event takes place in South-East Asia, a region that is increasingly prone to extreme natural events. Typhoons, storms, floods, droughts and earthquakes affect the existence of millions of people, causing loss of lives and the destruction of properties. As is the case in many emergencies, those most vulnerable also tend to be the ones who suffer the brunt of the damage when these disasters struck.

When we adopted the Sendai Framework more than 7 years ago, we embarked on a path aimed at reducing the overall likelihood and impact of disaster risks by, among others, working to strengthen risk governance, enhance resilience and reinforce local and national capabilities to recover quickly when disasters occur.

In recent years, we have witnessed an escalation of the frequency and the magnitude of extreme weather events, which are in most cases foreseeable. It is thus critical that we bring about a paradigm shift on the way we understand and deal with disaster risk. We must focus our efforts and our capabilities to reinforce our preventive measures, in an attempt to prevent, or at least limit, the damage of extreme natural events. Anticipatory action is therefore more central than ever in our world and is faster, cheaper and more dignified.

This approach to disaster risk management is the reason why Italy considers the development of multi-hazard early-warning systems as a core element of its action in the field of disaster risk reduction.

I am particularly grateful and eager to share today the results of our fruitful collaboration with UNDRR in the past few years. In Africa for instance, a continent frequently subject to extreme natural events due to climate change, our joint efforts aimed at strengthening early warning systems and reinforcing transboundary risk management in the continent through the application of tools and methodologies developed by the Italian Civil Protection Department and the private sector. Over the course of 2021 for example, we have inaugurated a continental “Situation Room” within the African Union Commission and a regional one within the IGAD, which will help monitor and anticipate risks by ensuring knowledge sharing and encouraging a coordinated approach to disaster risk management. We are very proud that this project creates the conditions for the African stakeholders to be leading partners rather than beneficiaries.

We have come a long way in our mission to reduce the effects of extreme natural events. But as significant as our efforts may have been, we are set to be called into action more and more frequently because of climate change.
It is thus paramount that we take this opportunity and the next few days as a chance to share what we have learnt, the best practices we have developed, as well as the challenges that we have faced, in an attempt to **maximize our chances to meet the objectives that we defined 7 years ago in Japan.**

Thank you.