

Summary Report
7th Emergency Preparedness Working Group
28-29 January, 2015, Subic, Philippines

The **7th Emergency Preparedness Working Group** was held in Subic, the Philippines, on 28-29 January, 2015. The meeting was presided by Co-Chairs **Ph.D. Li, Wei-Sen** (Chinese Taipei) and **Mr Kiyoshi Natori** (Japan), and assisted by the Secretariat's Program Director **Mr Diego Garcia**.

The two-day meeting was attended by 17 of the 21 APEC member economies. All except Brunei Darussalam; Hong Kong, China; Malaysia and Thailand. Members welcomed invited participants: Undersecretary Mr Alexander Pama (Executive Director of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council Office of Civil Defense of the Philippines); the representative of the SOM Chair, Undersecretary Mr Ferdinand Cui Jr and Ms Mika Takahashi from APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC).

Key outcomes of the 7th APEC EPWG Meeting include:

Co-Chairs welcomed the host economy representative Undersecretary Alexander Pama, Executive Director of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council Office of Civil Defense of the Philippines. Undersecretary Pama welcomed all the delegates and delivered the opening remarks, in which emphasized the increasing frequencies and devastating impacts of disasters in the past years. Mentioned the importance of considering a holistic, comprehensive and integrated approach to address disasters. Finally noted that EPWG shall continue to strengthen regional and international cooperation and coordination to better protect the economy and trade from disruptions due to disasters, as well as he stressed that the outputs of the EPWG will serve the entire people of the Asia-Pacific region.

Co-Chairs highlighted that 2015 is a symbolic year since it is the anniversary of past major disasters. Remarked the involvement of the private sector in Disaster Risk Reduction field and expressed that the main task of the EPWG is to share practices and develop a new paradigm to effectively manage disasters.

Members reviewed and adopted the final annotated agenda (**2015/SOM1/EPWG/001**) for the meeting proposed by Co-Chairs and endorsed the 6th EPWG meeting Summary Report prepared by the Secretariat (**2015/SOM1/EPWG/002**).

APEC Secretariat reported the Budget Management Committee timeline, briefed on the project funding and the Ranking and Prioritization Criteria and also presented the New Scoring Template (**2015/SOM1/EPWG/005, 006 & 015**). Emphasized the need to prepare the Concept Notes for funding approval in accordance with the guidelines and criteria. Informed that the deadline for the submission of concept notes for Project Session 1-2015 is February 17, for approval on May and June; and for Project Session 2-2015 is on July 1, for September and October approvals. In relation with the approval process presentation, delegates were encouraged to check the APEC guidebook for the development of the concept note. Program Director announced that the EPWG has been ranked as First Priority, which is aligned with the promotion of international and regional economic integration. Finally members were updated on the key developments since last SOM meeting.

The Independent Assessor reported on the key developments and process of the EWPG 2015 Assessment. Highlighted that the goal is to assist the EPWG's steering committee in its continuing improvement efforts. Mentioned that the starting point of his work is to validate all that has been implemented since the assessment process started in 2011 and that the proposed approach is based on SCE-approved work plan for another human security sub-fora (former CTTF and current CTWG) (**2015/SOM1/EPWG/007**).

Intersessional Work & Outcomes of Completed Projects under EPWG in 2014

Co-Chair Dr Li Wei-Sen reported the updates on the inter-sessional work undertaken since the last EPWG meeting in Ningbo **(2015/SOM1/EPWG/020)**. Briefed on the EPWG's work in 2014, presented photos of the EPWG's activities and introduced the new characteristic of the EPWG website www.apec-epwg.org. Also presented on the key statements made during the "22nd APEC Economic Leaders Declaration" and on the Joint Statement of the "26th APEC Ministerial Meeting" **(2015/SOM1/EPWG/019)** which called for "tackling pandemic diseases and terrorism, furthering cooperation in disaster preparedness, increasing data sharing, and applying science and technology".

China briefed on the outcomes of the 8th Senior Disaster Management Senior Officials Forum, held in Beijing (August, 2014) on "Science and Technology strengthening disaster risk reduction" **(2015/SOM1/EPWG/032)**. During the Forum, which counted with the participation of seventeen economies and four international organisations, members realized that "effective application of science and technology may effectively reduce the losses, such as advanced early-warning and monitoring, modern communication network and information management". China presented the summary of the policy paper adopted, which included among others, the following key statements: section on disaster management, application of science and technology, implementation of Emergency Response Travel Facilitation, guidelines for appropriate donations, using new technologies, and trade recovery program.

Indonesia presented the workplan of "Emergency Response Travel Facilitation" related to disaster management and resiliency, supply chain and timely delivery of international support, including response teams. The workplan for APEC 2015 considers the establishment of a system that facilitates the travel of emergency response teams and the private sector for economic recovery following disasters, which aims to address the impediments in delivering and receiving assistance within the APEC region, establish voluntary practices in APEC and improve interoperability in disaster response.

Australia reported the outcomes of workshop "APEC Capacity Building Program Strengthening Governments' Role in Promoting Business Continuity Planning to Mitigate against the Impact of Disasters" **(2015/SOM1/EPWG/003)**. Copies of the booklet "How to promote Business Continuity Planning to mitigate against natural disasters - A guide for government officials" were distributed to the delegates. Australian delegate emphasized the issue on capacitating the SMEs on BCPs. Mentioned that one barrier on the use of BCPs is that the government agencies tasked to manage SMEs are not mandated to promote BCP usage. The workshop was conducted in order to address such barriers in order to encourage agencies to learn how to use and then prepare the plans of teaching the use of BCPs. Co-Chair (Chinese Taipei) commented that such initiative is important because it serves as an opportunity to access and to harmonize the perspectives of the government and the SMEs on BCPs.

The United States reported updates on U.S. non-paper "Efforts to Support Emergency and Disaster Preparedness, Recovery, and Resilience in APEC" **(2015/SOM1/EPWG/011)**, which included guidelines for facilitating movement of emergency responders across economies and supplementing information on personnel, goods and equipment during disasters. A survey will be conducted to identify best practices and form part of the guidelines. Also briefed on the Concept Note "Trade Recovery Program" **(2015/SOM1/EPWG/017)**, which is a software that will allow the governments and private sector to exchange information about the transportation status during disasters. The software is currently in its final stages of development. It will be tested in New Zealand using Tabletop Exercise.

Cross-fora collaborations with SMEWG, TPTWG, CTWG and OFWG

SMEWG delegate from Chinese Taipei reported the updates on the workplan on “Improving Natural Disaster Resilience of SMEs to Facilitate Trade and Investment” **(2015/SOM1/EPWG/023 & 024)**. Highlighted the importance of SMEs in the region and the need to strengthen their resilience from disasters. The emphasis of their work plan is the promotion of BCP, which is presently limited among the SMEs. Presented the summary of their activities from 2012 to 2015. One of the highlights was the publication of the guidebook on SME BCP in seven different languages, which has been used to train key economies on the use of BCPs by the application of the train-the-trainers approach. Delegate encouraged the economies to adopt the joint policy statement that focus on the promotion of SMEs while presented the upcoming activities of the workplan. Finally showed a video presentation on the achievements of Chinese Taipei for the past three years.

Following the United States question about the training process and selection, SMEWG delegate from Chinese Taipei answered that the Guidebook has been developed by key subject matter experts from various economies who worked with Chinese Taipei to localize the guidebook. Using train-the-trainers approach, those who are trained will cascade the BCP usage to their respective local SMEs. Australia expressed its support to Chinese Taipei on the next steps of the project while commented that BCP usage was one of the first projects introduced in APEC. Co-Chair Dr Li added that ADPC had been part of the promotion of the BCP guidebook in Thailand and Chinese Taipei was commended for its determination and dedication to promote the BCP. Also suggested that Chinese Taipei should explore how the business communities themselves can help in promoting the use of BCPs.

The delegate from the United States reported the status of collaboration with TPTWG on Global Supply Chain Resilience **(2015/SOM1/EPWG/013)**, which is focused on improving supply chain resilience in APEC. Underlined the importance of this subject because the disruption of supply production in one economy can have very large impacts to other economies. One example shown was the Thailand flooding in 2011, which resulted to decrease in global production of hard drives. For the next 5 years, the project teams will focus on developing action plan for supply chain resilience.

The delegate from Japan commented that they are currently doing a similar activity on supply chain resilience, in which the United States can collaborate. Part of their activities is the review of the economic impacts of disasters and the determination of measures to enhance supply chain resilience. Japan is planning to hold capacity building seminars and identify the best practices. The project is targeted to be completed on October 2015.

The delegate of the United States reported the collaboration with CTWG on the workshop “Enhancing Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience in the Asia-Pacific Region” **(2015/SOM1/EPWG/021)**. The workshop was held on October 2014, in Chinese Taipei. During the workshop, the delegates shared their expertise on CISR, combining presentations, exercises and breakout sessions. Through a Joint statement recommended the need to address the different types of threats and hazards, the importance of cooperating and next steps to further enhance on CISR.

The delegate from the United States reported the collaboration with OFWG on the project “Economic Valuation of Coastal Ecosystems for Improving Disaster Risk Reduction and Response and Coastal Resilience” **(2015/SOM1/EPWG/025)**. Presented the project background and history, including the proponents and co-sponsors. Project will begin in early 2015, which is divided into 3 phases: Gap Analysis, Valuation Study, and Dissemination of Report/Materials. It was emphasized that green infrastructure is relevant to all economies. The support of economies in terms of experts and resources were welcomed.

The delegate from Russia reported on the “Cooperation Program on Creating a Single Concept of Systems of a Customized Disaster Management Based on Modern ICT” **(2015/SOM1/EPWG/016)**. A run-through of APEC ICT-related projects for the past years was presented. Accordingly, APEC has wide range of experience on reduction of consequences and prevention of accidents, effective application of e-Health, and increase of extent of socialization of physically disabled people. The project seeks to create a common platform of interaction by all disaster management systems in the APEC region. This considers the development of a single concept of customized disaster

management on the basis of modern ICT, which will combine the best practices of APEC economies and the calculation of Key Performance Indicators. A Seminar is planned to be conducted on October 2015 in New Zealand. Russia shall update the EPWG once the dates and the venue are finalized. Co-Chair (Chinese Taipei) suggested that the document about the project to be circulated in order that member economies can learn how to join and support the project.

Collaborations of regional outreach

Co-Chair (Chinese Taipei) briefed on the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) Partnership Meeting 2014 **(2015/SOM1/EPWG/027)**. The focus of the partnership is the promotion of BCP in the hotel business. Certificates shall be issued to hotels that are prepared for disasters and emergencies.

Co-Chair reported the 6th Asia Ministerial Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR) **(2015/SOM1/EPWG/026)** held in Bangkok. Briefed on the main priorities of EPWG and, among other subjects, stressed the importance of strengthening public-private partnership in enhancing capacities in the Asia-Pacific to protect business, trade and economic growth, as well as communities from disruption caused by disasters. More details are provided in the APEC website and EPWG website.

Co-Chair (Japan) and the delegate from Japan presented on the the updates on the planned 3rd World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2015 in Sendai, Japan. **(2015/SOM1/EPWG/008)**. The conference includes the review of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 and the adoption of post-2015 framework for DRR. Developments for the post-2015 framework were presented, including the priorities and the expected outcomes and goals. Timelines and other proposed events were also discussed. Also added that they are planning to conduct several fora in Japan and invited the delegates to share inputs in these fora.

Reports on Regional Activities and Recent Disasters

The delegate from the Philippines presented emergency operations of Typhoon Hagupit (Ruby) **(2015/SOM1/EPWG/028)**. Started with the explanation of the Philippines disaster risk profile and DRRM System. Highlighted the salient features of the Republic Act 10121 and the 4 DRRM thematic areas. Then presented several disaster response tools used by the Philippines government, emphasizing that the cooperation between the government and the people is the key to the successful operations for the typhoon. Among the key activities conducted, mentioned training, hazard mapping, early warning, pre-disaster risk assessment, prepositioning and pre-emptive evacuation.

The delegate from the Philippines presented the updates on the post-disaster recovery activities for Typhoon Haiyan **(2015/SOM1/EPWG/029)** and thanked the economies and other international organizations that helped the country to recovery from the disaster. A video presentation showed the impacts of Typhoon Haiyan and an overview of the Comprehensive Rehabilitation and Recovery Plan (CRRP). The CRRP contains the strategic programs and projects from 2014-2016 that are grouped into clusters. The guiding principle of the CRRP is build back better, safer and faster. After the video presentation, commented on the milestones and significant achievements of the CRRP as well as some of the best practices by the Philippines government. DVDs and flash drives containing the presentations were distributed to the EPWG members. The delegates from Canada, New Zealand and Vietnam pointed that it is worth learning from the professionalism and intellectual capital in DRR and also appreciated the success of the rehabilitation efforts of the Philippines. Vietnam delegate stressed that such presentation manifests the cooperation of APEC member economies to work together towards achieving resiliency.

The delegate from Japan presented the Mount Ontake volcanic eruption and Hiroshima landslide **(2015/SOM1/EPWG/004)**. After that a brief history of the Mount Ontake eruptions was presented, discussed the emergency measures of Japan such as search and rescue operations, use of sensors to monitor debris flow, deployment of volcanic experts, conduct of emergency work to prevent debris flow, and dissemination of sediment disaster alert. Short term and medium term measures were highlighted such as the conduct of emergency survey of the volcanoes and provision of information about volcanoes in Japan for travelers. Finally presented examples of the recovery measures such as the revision of Sediment Disaster Prevention Act and improvement of disaster risk information.

The delegate from Chinese Taipei reported on the massive gas explosion in Kaohsiung City **(2015/SOM1/EPWG/030)**. Briefly discussed the timelines of the explosion. And afterwards highlighted several emergency measures such as geo-spatial construction, the use of CCTVs to monitor the affected sites, and application of UAVs to take aerial images of the explosion. Shelters and recovery projects were undertaken, which was completed in 2 months. Lessons include the enhancement of safety regulations, improvement of pipeline safety engagement, and the inclusion of the pipeline system in GIS.

The delegate from Indonesia made a report on the landslide in Banjarnegara, Central Java, Indonesia **(2015/SOM1/EPWG/031)**. The landslide was caused primarily by the characteristics of the soil. Showed photos of the areas struck by the landslide and explain that different efforts were undertaken such as the collaboration of the forces and volunteers for search of the victims, provision of assistance by the senior officials and the issuance of state of emergency was issued. National resources were also coordinated by the government such as provision of financial aid and the deployment of heavy machineries to clean the roads and evacuation. Communities were then evacuated following the build back better and safer as the principle. Many areas were also installed with early warning systems. Co-Chair (Chinese Taipei) stressed the importance of timely evacuation of communities during disasters and suggested to consider landslide incidents as among the discussion points of the EPWG.

The delegate from China presented on the Ludian earthquake in Yunnan on August 3, 2014 **(2015/SOM1/EPWG/032)**. Provided an overview of the disasters that frequently visit China and the different types of disasters that it encounters. The earthquake resulted to several casualties, affected population and damaged properties. Highlighted the importance of the participation of non-government organizations during humanitarian assistance such as the Red Cross and China's Charity Association. Social workers also participated actively in rescue and recovery process. Disaster losses assessment was conducted for post disaster recovery. United States delegate appreciated China as well as the Philippines for recognizing the role of civil society organizations and volunteers, at the time that reiterated that DRR is not just a government concern but a multi-stakeholder partnership.

The United States gave a brief presentation on the Oso Mudslide in Snohomish County, Washington **(2015/SOM1/EPWG/012)**. Stated that rescue operations started within the first few hours and that the State of Washington was in coordination with FEMA and also commissioned a landslide report in order to improve the response and recovery efforts. More than 900 volunteers worked together in response efforts. Conclusions indicated the need to refine geologic mapping in the state of Washington and the commission recommended expanding data collection and mapping for sound Public-Private decision making and land planning use.

Additionally the US delegate highlighted some of the lessons learned such as: the funding of cross-jurisdictional coordination for emergency efforts; knowledge and understanding of landslides are needed; clear parameters are needed for activating "all-hazards mobilization"; and public awareness of the potential negative impacts to property caused by the existence of geologic hazards (lack of mapping products). Also briefed on the other lessons learned, such as: one stop shop for families for relief services; command and control must operate and transition smoothly; large incidents with multiple fatalities can overwhelm local coroners and medical examiners; local residents, loggers, contractors and business owners.

Co-chair (Japan), gave a presentation on the 20th anniversary of the Great Hanshin-Awaji (Kobe) Earthquake **(2015/SOM1/EPWG/010)**. First explained the number of casualties caused by natural disasters in Japan since 1945, underlining that at that time there were several occasions (due to typhoons, floods, and earthquakes) that have multiple casualties, however, during the 70's and 80's

period the number of casualties was reduced. Co-chair then briefed about the history of the Great Earthquake and outlined that from the damage caused, around 80% of the deaths were caused by suffocation. This led to policies requiring the retrofitting for schools, hospitals, and public buildings to bear the strength of the earthquakes. Incentives, such as tax breaks, were given to those who followed the policies and penalties were also given to those who have not complied. Stated that during the rescue phase of the great earthquake, many countries provided monetary and material donations. At the end of the year, the Prime Minister established an International Cooperation Hub where 22 countries were involved. Twenty years later, said that Kobe has completely recovered with documentations on how Japan has performed after the Great Earthquake.

The delegate from Indonesia presented the “Reflections on Indonesia’s emergency preparedness: 10 years after tsunami” **(2015/SOM1/EPWG/033)**. Started by introducing that Indonesia is located next to three plates and that also there are seven active volcanoes from a total of 127. Showed the total economic and social damages and losses in numbers. In relation with the consequences of the 2004 tsunami, explained that led to the strengthening of Indonesian Disaster Management policies and regulations. Sample of that was the Indonesia’s Law no. 24 (2007) which aimed to lead a disaster management system and also provided for the creation of disaster management agencies in the national, provincial, and district levels. The delegate stated that the 2004 tsunami was a wakeup call consequently leading to the creation of Indonesia’s National Disaster Management Plan.

The delegate stated that the tsunami was a reminder of the importance of the processing of tsunami information. Indicated that long term programs were implemented after the tsunami such as the construction of shelters. Also presented the activities commemorating the 10th anniversary of the Aceh Tsunami. Some of these activities comprised of seminars, exhibitions, publication of researches. In conclusion, the delegate stated that the experience has contributed to the creation of a “formula” in order to be successful in Disaster Management. Finally added that the government of Indonesia is committed to enhance DRR efforts while explained that maritime economic development investment should be a priority in their DRR efforts. After the presentation, Co-chair (Chinese-Taipei) gave a comment on the term “Forensic Investigation” which is highly attached to crime scene investigation. He stated that the term, in DRR parlance, is really an investigation before, during, and after disasters in order to mitigate future losses, indicating that it is a different approach to understand the root cause of disasters.

2015 EPWG Workplan

Co-Chair Dr Li Wei-Sen presented the EPWG Workplan for 2015 (**2015/SOM1/EPWG/014**) and highlighted its key points. Members discussed the Work Plan proposed, commented that deliverables for the workplan should be stated clear and suggested that these should be referred to as outputs, making reference to the outcomes. Additionally expressed that the source of the statements should come from the EPWG, meanwhile that the Philippines 2015 priorities can be amalgamated.

Australia proposed that the statements of the APEC leaders can be summarized highlighting the main points of the workplan and suggested that deliverables should be referred to as outputs. China agreed with the proposal and mentioned the importance to add the outcome reports from the APEC 2014 in China in order to connect both 2014 and 2015 work plans. Also Russia seconded the shortening of the leaders' statements and suggested to pay attention on decision makers between crisis management centers of APEC economies.

United States clarified that the gender focal point network, is now the policy partnership on women and the economy and the counter terrorism task force was upgraded to a working group. Also expressed interest in the science and technology to be identified as a group to enhance collaboration.

The Philippines suggested the need to identify deliverables for short, medium and long term, as well as the precision related with the activities. Papua Guinea recommended the use of matrix to display the activities, outcomes and outputs for easy and clear presentation.

The Independent Assessor, supported by the delegate from Australia, explained that the SCE does not have the ability to review the workplan. EPWG should work on reviewing the plan, consider the inputs from the delegates and consider it as its working and living document.

Co-Chair (Chinese Taipei) acknowledged the suggestions and recommended that each project should present outputs, outcomes as well as measurable index.

Finally, following the comments and proposals from the delegates, after the meeting concluded a revised workplan was provided to all members and finally endorsed.

The Philippines APEC 2015 Priorities

The SOM Vice-Chair Undersecretary Ferdinand Cui Jr., presented the *APEC 2015 Theme and Priorities*. Under the theme "*Building Inclusive Economies, Building a Better World*", four priorities were identified: (1) enhancing regional economic integration; (2) fostering participation of small and medium enterprises in regional and global markets; (3) investing in human capital development; and (4) building sustainable and resilient communities. While economies were encouraged to bring up proposals and initiatives, it was emphasized that according to these priorities "everyone benefits, everyone contributes".

New initiatives & Upcoming events

Co-Chair (Chinese Taipei) reported on the on-going project, "Application of Big Data and Open Data to Emergency Preparedness" (2015/SOM1/EPWG/034). Seeking a linkage with other APEC fora and working groups, the mentioned project aims to investigate current status of application and demands of data through a region-wide survey; develop a roadmap of capacity building on assisting member economies in establishing big data; promote open data for creating safer trade environment as well as formulate a mechanism sharing open data to strengthen emergency preparedness. The timeline for project implementation was discussed and considers the presentation of the final report during the 9th SDMOF.

Viet Nam reported on the on-going project, "APEC Workshop on Community Based Disaster Risk Management" (2015/SOM1/EPWG/035). Adopted by the BMC in December 2014, the mentioned workshop theme on CDBRM is related to the Responses to Climate Change, and shall tentatively coincide with the 9th SDMOF. Aims to identify gaps/capacity building needs among the economies with regard to CBDRM; develop a long term action plan for EPWG's consideration and building a network among experts supporting CBDRM; and develop a useful compendium of specific recommendations and best practices, tools, solutions and a checklist of policies.

Members welcomed the two EPWG Concept Notes submitted by the United States and the Philippines. Members were requested to send their feedback and the prioritization and ranking scoring of the mentioned concepts notes for submission to BMC Project Session 1, 2015.

United States submitted the Concept Note "Appropriate Donations Communications Toolbox" (2015/SOM1/EPWG/018), emphasizing the purpose that donations must be properly coordinated. The mentioned proposal aims to develop a database of customizable tools for use in public outreach to promote appropriate donations in times of disaster, which may be hosted on the EPWG website and/or other websites related to disaster relief and recovery operations; build support for communications toolkit through validation of the toolkit with APEC members; and create an action plan on implementation of toolkit suggestions in select economies.

The Philippines submitted the Concept Note "9th Seniors Disaster Management Official Forum" and presented the proposed theme "Whole-of-Economy Approach: A Paradigm Shift to Adapt to the New Normal" (2015/SOM1/EPWG/036&36a). The Forum aims to "provide a venue for heads of disaster management agencies in the Asia-Pacific region to share new approaches and paradigms in managing disaster risk reduction toward building resiliency; and look into opportunities in further enhancing and strengthening regional and international cooperation and coordination in the management of disaster risk reduction". Proposed date and venue is on 14-15 September 2015, tentatively in Manila (updated information is 22-23 September 2015, Iloilo).

In relation with the outcome that proposed the possibility of upgrading the SDMOF into a regular ministerial meeting, the discussion turned into the question between the difficulties to put together the ministers and the suggestion of organizing the SDMOF back-to-back with a ministerial meeting. The Philippines explained that the 9th SDMOF will be developed as planned and in the event that another meeting will be required, it will be subjected to the approval of the appropriate authorities.

Co-Chair (Chinese Taipei) seconded the difficulty of sending ministers to a meeting, however commented the importance to develop a strategy to put forward the outputs of the EPWG to the ministerial level, because EPWG concerns are connected to other areas. Then suggested that the SDMOF remains at the senior level and then bring the outcomes to the ministerial level, explaining that probably in Peru 2016 the idea can be implemented. The delegates from Japan and Russia supported the elevation to the ministerial level and emphasized the need for stronger commitment by the officials.

The delegate from Korea expressed concern in relation with the date of the SDMOF in September. Delegates from China and New Zealand emphasized that more preparations are required and additional time is needed to report the proposal to the higher authorities.

Co-Chair (Chinese Taipei) reported the “Enhancing Regional Digital Preparedness on Natural Hazards to Safeguard Communities and Business in The Asia-Pacific” **(2015/SOM1/EPWG/037)**. He also reported on the “Emergency Preparedness Capacity Building Center (EPCC)” **(2015/SOM1/EPWG/038)**. The new initiative aims to leverage resources for better capacity building for emergency preparedness.

Discussion on “Building Sustainable and Resilient Communities”

ABAC representative briefed on the “Recommendations to the Leaders” highlighting that APEC leaders should develop collective plans for disaster resilient ICT infrastructure throughout the region. Presented the “ICT infrastructure resilience against natural disasters” **(2015/SOM1/EPWG/009)**. Explained how ICT infrastructure was affected during the past major disasters in the region such as the Great East Japan Earthquake (2011), Thailand Flooding (2011), and Typhoon Haiyan (2013). Emphasized how the ICT infrastructure could contribute to saving lives, hence, it is important to protect it from disaster impacts. Shared real stories of the contributions of ICT infrastructure during the mentioned disasters and respective recovery contributions such as the use of social media and communication tools. Concluded that the ICT infrastructure is important to ensure safety, to access information promptly and stay connected, and to properly execute BCPs. Co-Chair (Chinese Taipei) indicated disaster resilient ICT infrastructure as the pillar of these initiatives, while he stressed that ICT infrastructure resiliency is necessary to enable information sharing during emergencies and that also the effective usage of SMS to disseminate messages.

Closing Remarks & Next Meeting

The Philippines representative Undersecretary Pama thanked to all members for their contribution to the meeting and delivered the closing remarks emphasizing the need for a strong inter-economy collaboration. He underlined that the exchange of discussions shows the commonalities of economies to ensure disaster resiliency in the region.

Dr Li Wei-Sen, on behalf of both Co-Chairs, expressed his sincere appreciation to the Philippines for its efforts to organize successfully the 7th EPWG Meeting in Subic as well as he confirmed the need for a second EPWG meeting scheduled in May 2015. He summarized the best practices and lessons learned from the presentations and discussions of the economies. In conclusion, he emphasized the importance of working together to achieve the goals of the EPWG during this year.

Next EPWG Meeting will be held in the margins of SOM2 in May, 2015 in Boracay Island, Aklan, The Philippines.
