

Private sector resilience initiatives take center stage at APMCDRR 2024

The Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR) 2024 was held with a strong focus on the private sector's role in building resilient communities. Hosted annually by the Philippine government and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), the conference brings together governments, civil society organizations, the private sector, and the academe from Asia and the Pacific to monitor, review, and enhance cooperation for the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) 2015-2030.

A key highlight of the conference has been the participation of Hans Sy, Chairman of the Executive Committee of leading integrated property developer SM Prime Holdings, Inc. (SM Prime), who delivered powerful remarks at both the Private Sector Partners Reception and the Plenary on Localization and Urban and Rural Resilience.

SM'S HANS SY'S VISION FOR A RESILIENT FUTURE

Emphasizing the importance of private sector engagement in DRR, Mr. Sy highlighted the need for businesses to integrate resilience into their core strategies, invest in vulnerable communities, and cultivate public-private partnerships. "Let us leverage our collective strength to create a region that is not only resilient but also prosperous and sustainable for generations to come," Mr. Sy said.

Mr. Sy's call to action resonated with attendees, inspiring them to take a more proactive role in building a robust region. "Let's reaffirm our commitment to the road ahead. Together, we can make our nations safer and more resilient."

THE INTERSECTION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND RESILIENCE

The conference also delved into the critical link between sustainable development and resilience. Mr. Sy underscored the importance of creating sustainable cities and communities, noting that as urbanization continues to accelerate, managing resilience in both urban and rural areas is imperative.

SM PRIME HOLDINGS: A MODEL FOR RESILIENCE

SM Prime, one of the largest integrated property developers in Southeast Asia, serves as an exemplary model of private sector leadership in DRR. The company's commitment to resilience is evident in its comprehensive disaster preparedness and business continuity programs. Through initiatives like the "Adopt-a-City" project together with the National Resilience Council, SM Prime is actively collaborating with government agencies and local communities to enhance their resilience.

SM Prime's innovative mall designs further demonstrate its commitment to disaster resilience by incorporating features such as rainwater catchment basins, automated weather stations, and earthquake recording instruments. The company builds beyond the building code and have



(L-R): Department of National Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro, Jr., Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga, Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr., Australian Ambassador to the Philippines Her Excellency (H.E.) Hae Kyong Yu, and Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General for Disaster Risk Reduction and Head of the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction H.E. Kamal Kishore, during the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR) 2024 Welcome Ceremony



(L-R): Co-Chair of the ARISE Philippines network Liza Silerio, UN ARISE Global Board Member Retired Vice-Admiral Alexander Pama, Department of Education Undersecretary Peter Corvera, and SM Prime Holdings (SM Prime) Chairman of the Executive Committee Hans Sy



(L-R): Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga, SM Prime Chairman of the Executive Committee Hans Sy, and Department of Interior and Local Government Secretary Jonvic Remulla discuss resilience during the Plenary on Localization and Urban and Rural Resilience.



Private sector leaders gather to discuss strategies for building resilient communities at the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR) 2024.

constructed a mall on stilts, as well as a mall with wick drains and a higher seawall.

DISASTER RISK REDUCTION SIMULATION AT THE SM RESILIENCE CENTER

The SM Resilience Center, a private sector DRR initiative, hosted delegates from the APMCDRR. Participants witnessed a simulation exercise showcasing coordinated disaster response efforts between the private sector, government agencies, and local governments. The center, built in 2019, aims to ensure business continuity and provide disaster-related services to SM properties and their tenants.



A disaster risk reduction simulation at the SM Resilience Center

A CALL FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION

The APMCDRR 2024 underscored the need for a collective effort to

address disaster risks. Mr. Sy's call for private sector involvement, coupled with the conference's focus on localization and urban-rural



SM Prime Chairman of the Executive Committee Hans Sy emphasizes the importance of private sector collaboration with governments in disaster risk reduction, urging businesses to invest in resilience and vulnerable communities.

resilience, provides a roadmap for building a more resilient Asia-Pacific region. By working together, governments, businesses, and communities can create a future where disasters are not just survived but overcome.

As the world continues to face increasing challenges related to climate change and natural hazards, the private sector's role in DRR becomes even more critical. The APMCDRR 2024 has demonstrated that by embracing resilience and promoting collaboration, we can build a safer, more sustainable future for all.