

Dear Mr. Shahbaz Khan, Mr. Changchui He and distinguished guests,

Good morning!

I am very delighted to be present at the opening ceremony of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Horizon Youth Summit. On behalf of Integrated Research on Disaster Risk, I would like to express sincere appreciation for your presence.

As Mr. Shahbaz Khan said in his speech, the United Nations attaches great importance to the power of youth. UNESCO, as the specialized agency of the United Nations in the field of international education, science and culture, aims to promote understanding, exchange and cooperation among nations, peoples, cultures and generations through education, science and culture and public communication, to contribute to world peace and to the building of ideas for the maintenance of peace and security.

UNESCO pays special attention to the vitality and perspective of young people in the process of global education governance, peace maintenance and sustainable development, which requires their participation, responsibility and dedication. So, I would like to thank Mr. Shahbaz Khan in particular for attending the opening ceremony and delivering the opening remarks. This is a wonderful beginning for the Summit, and meanwhile, it is also an important inspiration and support for the young people participating in the Summit and for the conference organizers. Thank you! Mr. Shahbaz Khan.

*Youth 2030: The United Nations Youth Strategy*, launched in 2018, states that "Young people's empowerment, development and engagement is an end in itself, as well as a means to build a better world." As the co-initiator of the Summit, Integrated Research on Disaster Risk (IRDR) highly recognizes the role of young people as an effective force for social development. It has been focusing on building the capacity of young people to participate in global initiatives and encouraging them to participate in the global governance process of disaster risk reduction (DRR), climate change adaptation and sustainable development. To this end, IRDR has established the IRDR Young Scientists Programme to build a broader, high-quality and accessible international network and platform for young people from all countries, especially DRR professionals.

In 2021, IRDR, together with the International Science Council and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, launched *A Framework for Global Science* toward the DRR research for 2030 and beyond. IRDR invites outstanding young people from all fields of expertise, particularly DRR, to engage and contribute to the implementation of this research framework, and to share innovations, insights and practices at the newly created IRDR Youth Podium and Youth Insight.

IRDR will further cooperate with Horizon to help young people gain a deeper understanding of the risks and challenges related to global ecosystems, environments and social development, and enhance their sense of participation and mission. IRDR will also bring together aspiring youth to focus on natural and man-made, emerging, systemic and cascading disaster risks, as well as systemic safety related issues in social development at a broader level. In particular, IRDR encourage and support young people to actively seek solutions for disaster risk reduction and development safety through their own innovations and practices.

The Second Youth Summit is such an important opportunity. During the two months from December 2022 to January 2023, more than 100 young people participated in global governance courses and practical guidance. Through intensive learning, they constructed a holistic view of global governance, understood widely concerned issues, and proposed innovative solutions to solve problems in the real society based on their own professional and experience in the innovation practice. I am very happy to see so many young people's enthusiastic participation!

At the opening ceremony and in the online conference room, I can see many experts and young people from various fields as well as stakeholders from UN agencies and social organizations. I sincerely appreciate your presence and supporting to the summit, and wish you enjoy the following 4 parallel online sessions.

Thank you.