

Thank you, Chair.

Iran aligns itself with the statement delivered by India on behalf of the Asia Regional Group, and welcomes FAO's efforts through the Global Fire Management Hub to strengthen international cooperation on integrated fire management.

From Iran's experience, the increasing frequency and severity of wildfires under changing climatic conditions demonstrate the importance of moving beyond a predominantly reactive approach towards prevention, risk reduction, preparedness, early warning, rapid response and recovery.

I would like to share a practical experience from Iran.

Through improved organization and management of available firefighting equipment, facilities and human resources, together with a strong emphasis on timely reporting and early detection of forest fires, Iran has been able to make better use of the critical early period for fire suppression.

Despite severe climatic changes and increasingly challenging fire conditions, these measures have contributed, in the current year, to a 62 percent reduction in the number of fire incidents and an 83 percent reduction in the area affected by forest and rangeland fires.

An important element of this achievement has been investment in training and education, as well as the effective involvement of local communities living in and around forest areas. Their role in early detection, timely reporting, prevention and initial response has demonstrated the importance of community-based fire management.

Based on this experience, Iran would like to highlight three issues.

First, wildfire management should be integrated into landscape and watershed management. In countries such as Iran, forests are closely linked with water security, soil conservation, food security and rural livelihoods. Reducing wildfire risk should therefore be considered an integral part of integrated ecosystem and watershed management.

Second, local communities should be recognized as key partners in wildfire prevention, preparedness and early response. Combining local and traditional knowledge with modern technologies can significantly strengthen national fire-management systems.

Third, developing countries need greater access to affordable technologies, financing, scientific cooperation and knowledge transfer. Satellite-based monitoring, early-warning systems and reliable fire-risk information can substantially improve preparedness and reduce response time.

In this regard, Iran encourages FAO and the Global Fire Management Hub to facilitate the exchange of experiences and good practices among countries, particularly on early warning, rapid response, community participation and efficient use of national capacities.

Iran stands ready to share its experience and to contribute to regional and international cooperation towards more resilient forests, ecosystems and communities.

Thank you, Chair.