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EUROPEAN AND MEDITERRANEAN MAJOR HAZARDS AGREEMENT  
(EUR-OPA)

69<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT CORRESPONDENTS

HOTEL DOM PEDRO PALACE  
LISBON, PORTUGAL

25 OCTOBER 2016

MEETING REPORT

*Document prepared by the Secretariat  
of the EUR-OPA Major Hazards Agreement*

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## 1. ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT AGENDA

The Chair welcomed the participants to the meeting (see list of participants in appendix 2). The draft agenda *AP/CAT (2016) OJ 08* was adopted, with initial point 4 (preparation of the ministerial conference) moved for discussion in the afternoon (see appendix 1 for the final agenda).

## 2. SUMMARY OF THE LAST MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE PERMANENT CORRESPONDENTS

The Executive Secretariat summarised the main points of the last meeting.

It recalled the fruitful discussion on governance issues motivated by a presentation given by the Serbian representative on the lessons learned from their experience of flood devastation in South East Europe region in 2014 and the legislative changes it induced.

The Executive Secretariat also informed of the advancement of the activities on DRR related issues such as migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, children, as well as the long lasting cooperation with UNISDR.

Concerning migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, the preparatory work within the working group for the Conference on Migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in the context of major risk prevention and management (14 October, Lisbon, Portugal) was recalled and further information on its format and expected outcomes was provided. The training course on "Reducing the vulnerability of migrants in emergency situations" (29-30 June, Ravello, Italy), organised in collaboration with IOM, was also presented.

Concerning children, the conclusions of the Conference "Building a Culture of Prevention through Disaster Risk Awareness Improvement among Children and Adolescents" (10-11 December 2015, Sofia, Bulgaria) were presented as promising lines for future work on the topic. The updated information on the Besafenet initiative was also provided, informing of the delay in organising the online competition between schools.

Finally the involvement of the Agreement in two initiatives of UNISDR, namely the High-Level Forum on Implementing Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction at Local Level (16-17 June, Florence, Italy) and the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the EFDRR (4-6 October, Helsinki, Finland), was highlighted and in particular their respective importance to future cooperation with local authorities and national platforms.

The preparation of the 13th Ministerial Session of the EUR-OPA Major Hazards Agreement (25 October, Lisbon, Portugal) was discussed at length. After the presentation of the structure and aims of the Session, the draft Medium Term Plan was reviewed and the need to work towards more concrete proposals for implementation in 2018-19 (by the Specialised Centres in particular) was confirmed.

## 3. RECALL OF THE MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE AGREEMENT SINCE THE LAST MINISTERIAL SESSION

The Executive Secretariat recalled the three pillars of the past medium Term Plan 2011-15 and reviewed briefly the main activities developed under the Plan. It was emphasised that

the main innovation (and challenge) was to introduce the increasing role of people-oriented action. After the initial work done on the ethical principles associated to DRR, leading to a resolution adopted in 2011, the need for more practical proposals led to consider three vulnerable groups. If children remained a constant group of interest for the Agreement, two other vulnerable groups (disabled people and migrants) that were mostly ignored in existing procedures were highlighted as important issues.

The work on disabled people has resulted in the adoption of a recommendation as well as the preparation of guidelines and a toolkit in 2014. Concerning migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, the work has been continued during 2016 in order to also have a report, guidelines and a recommendation submitted for adoption to the Ministerial Session. The children-oriented activities were mainly organised around the Besafenet initiative that gathered together the contributions of various centres of the network on their respective expertise.

The MTP 2011-15 mentions to consider climate change impact and consequently led to considering the ecosystem approach to DRR as an interesting alternative to engineering. Following the preparation of a report on that topic and the adoption of a recommendation, two regional workshops were organised in 2012 (South Caucasus) and 2015 (the Balkans) to promote the use of such an ecosystem approach by actual stakeholders.

Two other recommendations on forest fires and radiological information were also adopted during that period. The Executive Secretariat finally wished to emphasise the contribution of centres' coordinated projects in the three main pillars of the MTP and highlighted several innovative studies done, keeping in mind that such work remains mainly basic knowledge but pointing out the efforts made to come closer to the actual needs of operative bodies. The UNISDR remarked that the extensive work developed by the Agreement helped in shaping out international considerations and has contributed to the topics included in the Sendai Framework for DRR.

#### 4. PROGRESS OF 2016 ACTIVITIES

- Brief review of 2016-17 Coordinated Projects

The Executive Secretariat remarked that 2016 is a transition year between two Medium Term Plans and consequently the choice was delayed until the confirmation in June of the new Medium Term Plan 2016-20. The selection of supported projects for 2016-17 was based on the four topics (namely knowledge, governance, awareness and involvement) that structure the new MTP and the wish to favour cooperation between centres on common projects.

It was noted that technical works remain a major part in the supported projects as it corresponds to the actual know-how of the centres. Nevertheless, several chosen projects focus already on the three other topics (and in particular on the involvement of people), paving the way to further convergence between the centres' work and priorities of the Agreement. In that sense, the Executive Secretariat emphasised that the identification of specific needs has to be done by the Permanent Correspondents to consolidate that trend.

- Migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in the context of major risks prevention and management

After recalling the previous steps in the project, the Executive Secretariat explained the work in this field developed since the last meeting of the Permanent Correspondents in June. The synergy with IOM, that runs a project “Migrants in Countries in Crisis” (MICIC) whose website contains examples from outside Europe, was emphasised through the joint training session organised in Ravello (Italy) and the IDRC 2016 special sessions in Davos.

The final conference of the project, organised with the support of Lisbon Municipality and Portuguese authorities, took place in Lisbon on the 14<sup>th</sup> October and gathered together 70 participants from various fields. Aside from the recommendation to be adopted at the Ministerial Session, the report and guidelines resulting from the working group were discussed and inspiring practices were also identified on that occasion. Some of the main conclusions of the Conference were the lack of consideration for migrants in general and thus the need for increased coordination of different types of organisations, better integration, more inclusive approaches and giving migrants a voice.

Several implementation workshops will help to make these recommendations more practical, an aspect that the Executive Secretary emphasised. Following the remark about the limited participation of Civil Protection services in the working group, the Chair insisted on the opportunity provided by the recommendation to raise their awareness on the topic and involve them in concrete proposals to review existing procedures in order to take into account the specificities identified.

- Involvement in international initiatives
  - High Level Forum “Implementing Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction at Local Level” (16-17 June 2016, Florence)

The meeting was organised by Italian Civil Protection in order to emphasise the new role of local authorities within the new Sendai Framework and to make proposals for the forthcoming UN Habitat work plan, where the cities’ DRR issues are taking an increasing role. Following the Florence call, the campaign “Making cities resilient” has been extended until 2020. It was pointed out that the role of local authorities was crucial in achieving concrete actions addressed to the population, as proved by the recent work of the Agreement on disabled people and on migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. It consequently implies to think about the future interaction of the Agreement with such local authorities. UNISDR Europe recalled that the relation between national and local authorities is crucial to have an effective prevention action according to the Sendai Framework and the campaign has already produced a set of useful tools that will be improved in the future.

- 7th European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction (3-5 October 2016, Helsinki)

As co-secretariat of the EFDRR (jointly with the UNISDR Europe and the European Commission), the Executive Secretariat expressed its satisfaction for its increasing success. After the Sendai Framework adoption, it was agreed that the EFDRR was the optimal place to adapt it to European specific needs: the Roadmap was thus adopted at its 6<sup>th</sup> meeting in Paris last year. A more concrete Action Plan associated to that Roadmap was adopted this year in order to define some major milestones. Although many national platforms already

include non-governmental participants, the decision was taken to open every two years, participation in the Forum to all stakeholders. The first forum will take place in Istanbul in spring 2017 and will allow preparing the European contributions to the forthcoming Global Platform to be organised in May in Cancun (Mexico).

## 5. FINAL PREPARATION OF THE 13TH MINISTERIAL SESSION

The Executive Secretariat recalled the structure of the Ministerial Session, organised around four sessions corresponding to:

- New needs: learning from the refugee crisis
- New partnerships: sharing tasks among entities
- New threats: preparing for unanticipated events
- New interactions: making people a resilience tool

The Executive Secretariat also presented the three documents submitted for adoption at the Ministerial Session:

- Recommendation on the Inclusion of Migrants, Asylum Seekers and Refugees in disaster preparedness and response
- Resolution on "Building more disaster resilient societies in Europe and the Mediterranean region: Priorities for Action"
- Medium Term Plan 2016-20

Following the discussion of the proposed content, only very minor adjustments were introduced in the texts finally submitted to the Ministerial Session for adoption. Finally, Permanent Correspondents appreciated the high level of participation expected for the Ministerial Session and the diversity of topics covered by their interventions.

## 6. ADOPTION OF THE BUDGET FOR 2017

The Executive Secretariat briefly presented the updated budget for 2017 that will be formally adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in December. It emphasised that the total amount remains unchanged and pointed out that there is neither significant changes in each Member country's contribution for 2017.

## 7. OTHER BUSINESS

The Executive Secretary *ad interim*, Eladio FERNANDEZ-GALIANO, informed the participants of the changes to take place in the Executive Secretariat from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017. He announced that he will be replaced as Executive Secretary by Mr Gianluca SILVESTRINI, formerly Head of the Managing Diversity Division in the Democratic Governance Directorate of the Council of Europe. He also informed that Francesc PLA, Deputy Executive Secretary of the Agreement, will also quit the Executive Secretariat at the same time. All the participants thanked both for their constant commitment to the Agreement and looked forward to a fruitful collaboration with the renewed Executive Secretariat.

## 8. DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The Chair informed the participants that Monaco proposed to host the next meeting of the Committee of Permanent Correspondents: it will take place in early Spring (date yet to be

confirmed) and a special session devoted to celebrating the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Agreement will be included in the meeting.

## APPENDIX 1

### AGENDA

#### **1 ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

*AP/CAT (2016) OJ 08: Draft Agenda*

#### **2 RECALL OF THE LAST MEETING OF THE PERMANENT CORRESPONDENTS**

*AP/CAT (2016)09: Conclusions of the 68<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Committee of Permanent Correspondents, 7 June 2016, Paris*

#### **3 COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIR, THE DELEGATIONS AND THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**

- Recall of the main achievements of the Agreement since the last Ministerial Session  
*AP/CAT (2014)10 bil: Activities developed within the Coordinated Programmes for 2012-2013*  
*AP/CAT (2016)10 bil: Activities developed within the Coordinated Programmes for 2014-2015*

#### **4 PROGRESS OF 2016 ACTIVITIES**

- Brief review of 2016-17 Coordinated Projects  
*AP/CAT(2016)11: Coordinated Projects supported in 2016-17*
- Migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in the context of major risks prevention and management
  - Outcomes of the Conference on Migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in the context of Major risks prevention and management (14 October 2016, Lisbon)
  - Report "Migrants, Refugees, Asylum Seekers: Inclusion in Disaster Preparedness and Response"  
*APCAT(2016)07*
  - Guidelines for Assisting Migrants, Asylum Seekers and Refugees during emergencies and disasters  
*APCAT(2016)08*
- Involvement in international initiatives
  - High Level Forum "Implementing Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction at Local Level"(16-17 June 2016, Florence)  
*"The Florence Way Forward" on the Implementation of Sendai Framework at the Local Level*
  - 7th European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction (3-5 October 2016, Helsinki)  
*Helsinki Outcomes*

#### **5 FINAL PREPARATION OF THE 13<sup>TH</sup> MINISTERIAL SESSION**

- Review of the draft agenda and format of the Ministerial Session  
*AP/CAT(2016)OJ02 REV: Draft Agenda Ministerial Session*
- Brief discussion of the documents presented
  - Draft resolution "Working together in Europe and in the Mediterranean for the Prevention of Disasters, Preparedness and Response: Priorities for Action"  
*APCAT Res(2016)1*
  - Draft Medium Term Plan 2016-2020  
*APCAT(2015)12 REV*
  - Draft recommendation on "Migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in the context of major risk prevention and management"  
*AP/CAT Rec(2016)1*
- Other topics

#### **6 ADOPTION OF THE BUDGET FOR 2017**

**7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**8 DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT MEETING**



## APPENDIX 2

### LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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