

Strasbourg, 14 September 2022

AP/CAT(2022)07

EUROPEAN AND MEDITERRANEAN MAJOR HAZARDS AGREEMENT

MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT CORRESPONDENTS

VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE

MEETING REPORT
5 September 2022 (9:30-12:00)

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

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PARTICIPANTS:

Bureau members:

Mikaella Mala (MM): Chair
Alessandro Balducci (AB): Vice-Chair
Anton Micallef (AM): Vice-Chair
Nataša Holcinger (NH): previous Chair

Council of Europe (CoE) Secretariat:

Krzysztof Zyman (KZ): EUR-OPA Executive Secretary
Catherine Emezie (CE): EUR-OPA Secretariat

1. ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT AGENDA AP/CAT(2022)OJ06

The agenda was adopted without amendment.

2. STATEMENT OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

The Executive Secretary welcomed the participants and updated on some recent developments within the Agreement. Following the departure of Ms Braulio to a new post on 1 September, KZ is in the process of recruiting a replacement who will join the Secretariat from October to December.

The Agreement currently faces an uncertain future given the Russia's departure from the Council of Europe and the announced Belgium's withdrawal as of 1 January 2023.

The proposals on funding in 2023 were shared with the Ambassadors of the member States, CPCs and the Committee of Ministers.

KZ pointed out that meeting reports and recommendations should be used by the CPC to provide information to other national stakeholders about the Agreement's actions.

KZ informed the Bureau about the International Conference on Urban Risks (ICUR2022) held in Lisbon on 23-24 June, that he attended and about the Conference on Inclusive and collaborative systems for heat wildfire and risks governance scheduled for 20-21 October in Athens, co-organised by the authorities of Greece and the UNDRR. It will gather ministers from Greece, the Balkans and the Mediterranean. KZ will attend the Conference and will arrange for an expert to deliver a key note address.

Regarding project funding in 2022, 92 560K had been allocated to several projects and contracts. In 2023 with significantly reduced funding, directors of specialised centres in the member countries would be prioritised over those in non-member states. However, the centres would be encouraged to continue cooperation on projects regardless of the Agreement's funding situation.

3. PREPARATION OF THE NEXT JOINT MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT CORRESPONDENTS (CPC) AND DIRECTORS OF SPECIALISED CENTRES

KZ invited the Bureau to discuss the draft agenda of the next Joint Meeting on 17-18 November 2022 in Paris (AP/CAT(2022)OJ05). The CPC will meet on the first day to discuss relevant issues, i.e. statutory meetings and reports, review the budgetary situation. KZ and AM have concluded the revision of the Rules of Procedure and will present their work to the CPC. The meeting documents will be distributed six weeks before the meeting. The Rules of Procedure will clearly define/distinguish the roles of the Executive Secretary, the Chair, the Bureau and the Committee in its full composition. The priorities of the Agreement and its work programme will be elaborated. On the second day, the directors of specialised centres will present their activities and achievements for 2022 and the project plans for 2023.

Thematic discussions will focus on the priorities elaborated in the Medium-term Plan 2021-2025 such as people with disabilities, using new technologies to better understand/address risk, etc. In this

context, an expert could be invited to give an up-to-date key note speech/presentation followed by a discussion.

On 10 February, a Sub-Committee to Evaluate the Project Proposals composed of NH and KZ (and the Russian CPC at the time) was formed to evaluate project proposals from the specialised centres. The Sub-Committee disseminated all the project proposals to the CPC for their comment/review. The Secretariat did not receive any comments or objections.

AB suggested to favour funding collaborative projects over financing single projects. KZ fully supported and encouraged the grouping of projects, more so due to the limited funding available.

4. FUNCTIONING OF THE AGREEMENT [AP/CAT\(2007\)32](#)

KZ informed the Bureau about recent developments within the Agreement. The Agreement is currently undergoing an external audit covering 2018-2021, during which time resolutions were adopted, external studies conducted and the ministerial meeting held. KZ will meet with the auditors next week and has also provided them with the contact details of PCs and Directors of Specialised Centres who will receive a questionnaire regarding their country's participation in the Agreement. KZ emphasised the importance of gauging the perspective of the member states, on the perceived benefits of belonging to the Agreement. The other purpose of the audit is for the eventual restructuring of the Department, as several other divisions under the Culture, Nature and Heritage Department are also undergoing an audit.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

KZ informed the Bureau of the new Director-General, Ms Maria Ruotanen (Finland) taking the post on 1 September. He also informed about Ms Maguelonne Dejeant-Pons retirement on 1 July.

NH announced the organisation of a workshop on finance in partnership with UNDRR in Dubrovnik in October.

6. DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next Bureau meeting date and venue are to be confirmed.