

Strasbourg, 10 August 2023

AP/CAT(2023)04

EUROPEAN AND MEDITERRANEAN MAJOR HAZARDS AGREEMENT

MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT CORRESPONDENTS VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE

MEETING REPORT 5 July 2023 (9:30-10.30)

*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): Ex-Chair (excused)

Council of Europe (CoE) Secretariat:

Krzysztof Zyman (KZ): EUR-OPA Executive Secretary

1. ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT AGENDA [AP/CAT\(2023\)OJ03](#)

The Executive Secretary welcomed the participants. He informed the Bureau about the aims of the meeting. The agenda was adopted without amendment.

2. STATEMENT BY THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

The Executive Secretary (KZ) gave an update on the recent developments.

At the 4th Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe held in mid-May 2023 in Reykjavik, member States adopted a Declaration "[United Around Our Values](#)" in which they underlined the urgency of taking co-ordinated action to protect the environment by countering the triple planetary crisis of pollution, climate change, and loss of biodiversity. The Declaration, which provides guidance for future priorities of the Council of Europe affirms that human rights and the environment are intertwined and that a clean, healthy and sustainable environment is integral to the full enjoyment of human rights by present and future generations. This augurs well for the future engagement of the Council of Europe in the field of protection of the environment by countering inter alia climate change, which in turn is known to increase the frequency and intensity of weather-related events that can cause disasters.

The membership of the Agreement remains stable with no participating State having indicated within the prescribed deadline an intention to change their status. This creates a favourable perspective for continued functioning of the Agreement in 2024, albeit the final decision is taken when the Council of Europe budgetary decisions are taken. It is expected that such decisions will be taken, in line with the established procedure in November 2023.

The Bureau members welcomed this information and held a brief exchange of views on the above topics.

3. FUNCTIONING OF THE AGREEMENT

The Executive Secretary informed the Bureau about Ukraine's inability to meet its financial obligations in 2023 vis-à-vis EUR-OPA on account of the ongoing Russian aggression against that country. This means that Ukraine has not and will not pay its 2023 contribution to EUR-OPA's budget. A proposed solution involves covering, subject to agreement of other EUR-OPA member States, Ukraine's outstanding contribution for 2023 by the budget surpluses from 2018 and 2022.

After a discussion, it was agreed that the Executive Secretary addresses an email to all Permanent Correspondents to explain the situation.

4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other issues were raised.

5. DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next Bureau meeting will be held on Wednesday 13 September, in particular to prepare the 80th Joint Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Correspondents and the Directors of Specialised Centres, that will be held on 6 and 7 November 2023 in Strasbourg.

6. END OF THE MEETING