

Strasbourg, 23 October 2024

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## **EUROPEAN AND MEDITERRANEAN MAJOR HAZARDS AGREEMENT**

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

#### **MEETING REPORT**

**3 October 2024 (9:30-10.30)**

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

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## **Bureau members:**

Dominika Reynolds (DR): Chair  
Alessandro Balducci (AB): Vice-Chair  
Anton Micallef (AM): Vice-Chair  
Natasa Holzinger (NH): Ex-Chair

## **Council of Europe (CoE) Secretariat:**

Tanja Kleinsorge (TK): Head of Department, Reykjavík Process and Environment  
Krzysztof Zyman (KZ): EUR-OPA Executive Secretary  
Catherine Emezie (CE): EUR-OPA Secretariat

### **1. ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT AGENDA**

The Executive Secretary welcomed the participants and proceeded to share the aims of the meeting. The agenda was adopted without amendment.

### **2. STATEMENT BY THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**

KZ informed the Bureau about the ongoing work in the Council of Europe to implement the Reykjavik Process. To enhance and better co-ordinate the existing Council of Europe activities related to the environment, a new Department "Reykjavík process and environment" was created in 2024 and an Inter-secretariat Taskforce on the Environment was set up to help focus, streamline and co-ordinate the Organisation's activities. It started identifying the challenges raised by the triple planetary crisis of pollution, climate change and loss of biodiversity for human rights, democracy and the rule of law, and suggested elements contributing to the development of common responses thereto.

Further to the Reykjavík Summit in May 2023, the Committee of Ministers held its ministerial session in May 2024 and agreed the preparation of a Council of Europe Strategy on Environment and the setting up of the Multidisciplinary Group on the Environment (GME), an interdisciplinary intergovernmental committee, which was mandated with the preparation of the Council of Europe Strategy. The GME held its first meeting last month and should have the Strategy ready for adoption by the Committee of Ministers at their Ministerial Session in May 2025. The meeting was attended by CPC's ex-chair Ana Freitas (Portugal), who will report on the proceedings at the next CPC meeting.

The activities implemented within the network of scientific centres continue to be implemented without major problems, and the budget of the Agreement has been fully put to that use, without being overspent.

Responding to DR's enquiry, KZ informed that whereas no funding for the Enhancing Civilian Preparedness for Technological Disasters in Ukraine (ECP-TDU) has been secured, there has been an enquiry from one of the countries, non-Party to the Agreement, about it. The Secretariat continues to approach other potential donors.

KZ informed the Bureau also about the ongoing collaboration with the UNDRR to prepare the Europe and Central Asia Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction that will be held in Budva, Montenegro on 6-8 November 2024.

### **3. PREPARATION OF THE NEXT JOINT MEETING OF THE PERMANENT CORRESPONDENTS AND DIRECTORS OF SPECIALISED SCIENTIFIC CENTRES**

The next meeting of the Permanent Correspondents will be held in Paris on 21 and 22 November. The CPC will be invited to discuss the proposals contained in the working paper on the right to living in a clean healthy and sustainable environment, prepared by Professor Elisabeth Lambert.

There will be also an opportunity to discuss the main takeaways from the first meeting of the Ad Hoc Multidisciplinary Group on Environment (GME) held on 25-27 September 2024 and the opportunities for increasing the Agreement's visibility offered by the successive four Chairmanships of the Council of Europe of four Agreement's member States (Luxembourg: November 2024 – May 2025, Malta: May – November 2025, Moldova: November 2025 – May 2026 and Monaco: May – November 2026).

The Directors of the Specialised Centres will be invited to share information on the outputs from the projects implemented under the aegis of the EUR-OPA Network.

KZ also proposed that a preliminary exchange of views on the date and venue of the next Ministerial Meeting be held.

Finally, responding to the Chair's question, KZ informed about the enquiries from a potential donor to the Project "Enhancing Civilian Preparedness for Technological Disasters in Ukraine".

#### **4. FUNCTIONING OF THE AGREEMENT**

EUR-OPA is proceeding without major changes and with no accessions or withdrawals signalled in the last months. The operational budget of the Agreement has been allocated in its entirety to statutory activities and projects implemented by the Centres.

The Department "Reykjavík process and environment" that was created at the beginning of 2024 continues to co-ordinate the existing Council of Europe activities related to the environment. A new and an Inter-secretariat Taskforce on the Environment was set up to identify the challenges raised by the triple planetary crisis of pollution, climate change and loss of biodiversity for human rights, democracy and the rule of law, and to suggest elements contributing to the development of common responses thereto. The Agreement is fully involved in that process.

#### **5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

No other issues were raised.

#### **6. DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING**

No Bureau meeting will be held prior to the CPC meeting in November. Any exchange of information would be via email.