

Strasbourg, 03 October 2025

AP/CAT(2025)03  
Or. English

European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement  
(EUR-OPA)

Committee of Permanent Correspondents Bureau Meeting

Via videoconference

16 September 2025

Meeting report

## Participants

### Bureau members:

Ana Freitas (AF): Vice-Chair  
Anton Micallef (AM): Vice-Chair  
Mikaella Mala (MM): Ex-Chair

### Council of Europe (CoE) Secretariat:

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

### Absent:

Dominika Reynolds (DR): Chair (excused)

## 1. ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT AGENDA [AP/CAT\(2025\)OJ03](#)

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

## 2. STATEMENT OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

KZ shared an update about the Agreement's overall situation. The financial situation has not improved given that two member States have not fully paid their outstanding contributions.

## 3. PREPARATION OF THE 84<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT CORRESPONDENTS [AP/CAT\(2025\)OJ04](#)

KZ informed that the 84th committee meeting's intergovernmental part will primarily focus on adoption of the draft recommendation on *Citizen-centred prevention and preparedness in the face of natural hazards connected to climate change* ([AP/CAT\(2025\)01 REC](#)).

The CoE Committee of Ministers met in Luxembourg in May 2025 and adopted the Council of Europe Strategy on the Environment and strongly encouraged member States to implement its Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2022\)20](#) on human rights and the protection of the environment. Furthermore, it instructed its Deputies to move forward as quickly as possible in their consideration of a possible binding or non-binding instrument in this field.

Working within its area of competence, EUR-OPA has prepared a draft recommendation on *Citizen-centred prevention and preparedness in the face of natural hazards connected to climate change* which picks up threads of the working paper on State obligations and people's right to be protected from the serious effects of global warming drafted by Professor Lambert. KZ will present this recommendation at the next EUR-OPA Joint Meeting. Prior to this, the draft will be sent to the permanent correspondents for reflection prior to its adoption and follow up. The

Agreement's hierarchy has approved the document's circulation within the committee.

AF noted that it would be beneficial to refer to the EU Preparedness Union Strategy for climate disasters in order to foster engagement with the national authorities. The strategy could be referenced as being complementary to the Sendai Framework as it contains key actions on inclusion, youth preparedness, education curricula etc. MM agreed with AF's suggestion.

Decision: KZ will add a paragraph in the draft recommendation referencing the EU Preparedness Union Strategy and will consult with AF on its wording.

AM supported a proposal of the draft recommendation but shared his concerns about moving it away from its earlier emphasis on human rights and safety. KZ affirmed that EUR-OPA would carefully follow the CoE's general approach in order to maintain a coherent approach with regard to the environment, focusing on prevention and preparedness in the face of natural and technical hazards.

KZ had recently been in contact with a representative of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) which has a substantial component on humanitarian action in natural and technical disasters. UfM is made up of all the EU member States and 16 Euro-Mediterranean countries, enjoying strong political backing and are active in several fields. Mr Valentin Forand, civil protection and disaster risk management expert with UfM, will participate in the Joint Meeting to present UfM's work, as part of efforts to increase networking. He noted that UfM hosted a Euro-Mediterranean Workshop on Forest Fire Prevention in April 2024. Given that UfM, FAO and EUR-OPA are all working in this field, there is a strong need for coordination in order to avoid overlapping. AM will make more enquiries in order to determine how Malta interacts with UfM in order to better understand/benefit from Mr Forand's intervention.

KZ has also invited a UNESCO representative to discuss their work to reduce disaster risk and strengthen resilience, biodiversity, and sustainable development. In particular discussing coastal erosion would be of great relevance as this subject area is of great relevance to the work carried out by the specialised centres. The centres will then proceed to share their 2025 achievements and planned projects for 2026.

#### 4. 31<sup>st</sup> EDITION OF THE NORTH-SOUTH PRIZE OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE



Letter NSC  
Chair(2025)2-40- Call

KZ received an invitation from the Congress of Local and Regional centres and the North South Centre to nominate candidates for the 31st edition of the North-South Prize of the Council of Europe. KZ will respond indicating that the Agreement has no candidates to put forward at this time.

#### ANY OTHER BUSINESS

KZ informed the Bureau that the directors of specialised centres were informed through Johan Goldammer (Director, GFMC in Freiburg), of a proposal for cooperation

coming from the Rector of the IPB University in Bogor, Indonesia and encouraged to consider possible areas of collaboration.

With regard to preparation of the ministerial meeting, KZ will begin to draft the relevant documents and circulate these before the next committee meeting. The permanent correspondents will be asked to provide feedback.

END OF THE MEETING