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**EUROPEAN AND MEDITERRANEAN MAJOR HAZARDS AGREEMENT  
(EUR-OPA)**

**JOINT MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT CORRESPONDENTS AND  
DIRECTORS OF SPECIALISED CENTRES**

**MEETING REPORT**

6-7 November 2018  
Hotel Academia (Ul. Ivana Tkalčića 88, 10000 Zagreb)

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

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## Tuesday 6 November 2018

### WELCOME ADDRESS

D. Lozancic, Director General of the National Protection and Rescue Directorate of Croatia opened the meeting and welcomed the participants. Informing that it had been 6 years since the last EUR-OPA event was held in Croatia, he urged the member States to endeavour to continue the good work in spite of the gaps created by the withdrawal of member countries and the reduced funding. This would necessitate a restructuring of EUR-OPA; i.e., a new format and focus on topics of projects tailored to the member countries needs to fight hazards. EUR-OPA activities are of importance and are of added value as they cover disaster management, vulnerable groups, cultural heritage, international migration and so on. Although the recommendations are not binding, they could provide the basis for developing national strategies, a good example being the interagency and multidisciplinary network created in Croatia.

V. Baus, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Croatia, expressed gratitude and thanked the Council of Europe (CoE) Secretariat for the organisation of the Joint Meeting. She reminded that the meeting was organised as part of the activities marking Croatia's first CoE chairmanship since their membership of the CoE in 1996. V. Baus outlined Croatia's four priority areas: 1) promotion and protection of human rights, 2) fight against corruption, 3) strengthening local and self-government of regions 4) protection of cultural heritage.

G. Silvestrini, EUR-OPA Executive Secretary, thanked the dignitaries for their welcome and for hosting the Joint Meeting in the framework of the chairmanship of the CoE. This presented an opportunity to give visibility to EUR-OPA. He reminded that the intensification and regularity of disasters as well as the resulting human and economic loss meant that DRR is of greater significance. Reinforcing co-operation would help to achieve resilient societies and better management of disasters, recalling Croatia's longstanding support and hosting of a EUR-OPA meeting of the Committee of Permanent Correspondents in October 2012, in Dubrovnik. He thanked A. Vahtaric and her team for their important contribution to the organisation of the meeting in Zagreb, mentioning A. Vahtahric's support as a member of the CPC Bureau and overall involvement and commitment to EUR-OPA. G. Silvestrini welcomed the new Permanent Correspondent of Slovak Republic, Dominika Reynolds, and expressed his contentment for the new member State joining the EUR-OPA Agreement.

### 1. ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT AGENDA AP/CAT(2017)OJ04

Ana Freitas, chairperson, introduced the agenda and duly informed the participants about the aims of the meeting. The agenda was adopted and no amendments were made.

### 2. STATEMENT BY THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

G. Silvestrini summarised the latest developments at the Council of Europe and the impact on EUR-OPA. He expressed his satisfaction with EUR-OPA's achievements through the projects funded and several workshops. Turkey's decision to end its status as a major contributor to the CoE, followed by its surprising decision to withdraw entirely its EUR-OPA membership from the end of 2018 translates to a loss of 325K per year for EUR-OPA from January 2019.

Due to divergences between Russian Federation and the Parliamentary Assembly of the CoE (PACE), Russian Federation has withheld 2/3 of funds in 2017 and all of its 2018 contribution. As at the last PACE meeting in October 2018, this issue remains unresolved. EUR-OPA hopes that a solution can be found for next year to keep ECNTRM on board as well as retain their expertise. G. Silvestrini will prepare action plans reflecting both scenarios i.e., with or without Russia's contribution. Possibly, Russia would be the only major contributor, accounting for 45% of EUR-OPA's 2019 budget.

### 3. PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES 2018

**3.1** Joint Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Correspondents with the Directors of the Specialised Centres (Paris, 6-7 November 2017). *Meeting report [AP/CAT\(2017\)20](#)*

A. Freitas recalled the salient points of the last Joint Meeting noting in particular the:

- presentation of 2017 project achievements and 2018 project plans by the directors of specialised centres;
- Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2018\)3](#) on *Cultural heritage facing climate change: increasing resilience and promoting adaptation*;

- appointment of a gender equality rapporteur who would seek ways to include gender equality in EUR-OPA projects;
- work on environment and risk management;
- follow up of EUR-OPA recommendations;
- training for directors of centres in CoE financial rules, reporting and the new project template.

The Chair informed about the meetings of the Bureau of the Committee of Permanent Correspondents in Strasbourg on 12 April 2018 and in Paris on 2 October 2018. GS invited participants to read the Bureau reports during the year in order to be updated on EUR-OPA activities.

**3.2 Specialised Centres: Results of 2018 projects and update on 2019 projects.** Participants were informed of 2018 project achievements and were updated on 2019 projects. *Draft compilation of project proposals* [AP/CAT\(2017\)12REV](#)

**3.3 Presentations:** the directors of specialised centres presented their 2018 project achievements and informed about their 2019 projects focusing on the four thematic areas:

- Using scientific and technological knowledge
- Developing cooperation among all decision-makers
- Promoting risk culture among the population
- Fostering population's active participation

**Projets: Enhancing the national interagency and international cross-boundary dialogue and inter-operability in fire management in Southeast Europe and Eastern Europe  
Establishment of the Eurasian Team of Specialists in Landscape Fire Management**

**J. Goldammer (GFMC, Freiburg)** presented the 2018 project activities. This included chairing a high-level roundtable in Greece, in its capacity as a EUR-OPA specialised centre, focusing on the establishment of an independent commission on the Future of Fire Management in Greece, in August 2018. Other high-level meetings on fire management were also held in Moscow, focusing on the role and perspectives of fire management in the region, in Portugal looking into increasing landscape hazards, with extensive work carried out in Eurasia including Belarus, Mongolia, Ukraine and Russian Federation. A. Micallef asked if GFMC had given consideration to poly nuclear hydrocarbons (toxins) that are released as fires are burned, or if any studies done on the impact of burning in addition to pesticides. J. Goldammer explained that secondary contamination is a priority of GFMC and ECPFE (Greece) and they were working on the issue. A. Freitas explained lessons learned as people were warned via text messages about being exposed to extreme risks in the fire district with a dedicated telephone number for response and preventive action. This revealed the problem of how people interpreted the emphasis on 'extreme risk' without understanding this message as being preventive and not about imminent danger on one's doorstep. J. Goldammer also highlighted the problem of fire fighting by aircraft which could be inefficient as countries are not always prepared for air assistance due to incoherent coordination on the ground as well as inadequate procedures or standards. Improvement of the civil protection mechanism in the EU could be a long term development goal ([link to GFMC presentation](#)).

**K. Kolev (ECRP, Sofia)** collaborated as a partner centre to V. Poyarkov, (Kiev), E-S. Georgescu (ECBR, Bucharest) and A. Bantus (ECMNR, Chisinau). He did not make a presentation.

**Projet: Promoting risk culture among the population for informing and providing necessary knowledge for preventing the emergency situations generated by flood**

**E-S. Georgescu, (ECBR, Bucharest)** reminded participants about the series of 21<sup>st</sup> century challenge of increased catastrophes and the necessity to take preventive measures by establishing priorities, instruments and mechanisms. Looking at methods based on the experience of other member States bodies, municipalities, volunteers, through EU collaboration, protection of cultural heritage bearing in mind the trends and frequencies in flooding may necessitate a change from a defensive to a proactive approach. He stated the importance of awareness-raising for the population, schools, universities and specific zones and regions faced with growing risks. In 2018, ECBR circulated preparatory measures and information to areas exposed to heightened risks on how to behave during disasters, e.g. manuals, posters used in campaigns and education of citizens. Regional exercises were conducted with teachers and a course on improving the quality of instructors and information relayed to citizens to ensure citizens in flood risk areas are fully aware of the potential hazards. Activities included preparedness, dialogue, exchange of experiences, study materials, vulnerable persons specific measures, training of volunteers, encouraging solidarity, developing the capacity

to work in small groups. The 2019 project will be a continuation of 2018 activities. ([link to ECBR presentation](#)).

**Projet: BeSafeNet. Protect Yourself from Hazard**

**D. Christou (BeSafeNet, Nicosia)** summarised the project aim to provide an online interactive educational tool for teachers and students in order to help raise awareness about dangers linked to natural and technological hazards and promote risk culture. In collaboration with ICoD (Malta), V. Poyarkov (Ukraine) and CERG (France), 2018 focused on the preparation and promotion of an olympiad dedicated to secondary schools in the member States which will be held in April 2019 ([link to BeSafeNet presentation](#)).

**Projet: Development of innovative cost-effective autonomous telemetric early warning system for detecting floods, mudflows and rockfall initiation (2018 )**

**T. Chelidze (GHHD, Tbilisi)** gave an overview of 2018 activities and an example of early warning systems failures during floods which saw zoo animals left roaming the streets. Working in collaboration with CERG, Strasbourg, the project showed how data can be used to provide early warning. He cited the prohibitive costs of materials. 2019 will see a continuation of the 2018 project with a view to automate early warning systems. G. Silvestrini added that he had the opportunity to visit the project in the field and see first-hand the impact of the results and recommended promoting the results of T. Chelidze's work in the member States. He invited other directors to think about how they could promote the outcome of their work in their respective country as well as in other member States. S. Kachanov remarked that prior to this, to consider adopting a methodology on sharing laws on sustainable early warning systems in the member States ([link to GHHD presentation](#)).

**Projet: Fine and Ultrafine particles from forest fires: Recommendations/Guidelines for protection of vulnerable groups of population**

**S. Karma (ECFF, Athens)** summarised their main goals; focusing on priority target groups with special needs/vulnerabilities such as special wheelchair users, incubated babies, pregnant women, etc., in accordance with the Sendai Framework Targets in response to earthquake and fire in hospitals and coordinating evacuation. Fire and earthquake scenarios were staged in preparation of emergency evacuations of specific hospital wings. ECFF also participated in a meeting on "Help for All" organised by the Italian National Fire Department and the National Fire Academy in April in Rome focusing on the evacuation of patients with disabilities and other events ([link to ECFF presentation](#)).

**Projet: Local Knowledge and Media to Fight Natural Disasters (LoKMeFiND)**

**F. Ferrigni (CUEBC, Ravello)** focused on cultural heritage and risk management, particularly the media's important role to emphasise the knowledge of local communities on their territory and on potential disasters. Media have a role to raise the awareness of decision-makers on potential risk before disasters occur. He shared the highlights of the International Conference on "Culture against Disasters: protecting cultural landscape as prevention of natural disasters" (Ravello, Italy, 28-29 September 2018) co-sponsored by EUR-OPA. This event was reported in the local and national press. The CoE European Landscape Convention and representatives of various ministries and stakeholders participated. The problems discussed were mostly political in nature i.e., how to stimulate decision-making and ways to consider or apply ancient techniques to the landscape management without categorising them as outdated. Whether old and modern technology could/should be used in parallel? How to adequately distribute/use limited funding? How to capture the media's interest to take into account local knowledge before disasters occur? How can the media contribute more effectively to disaster prevention? For further information, refer to the meeting report [APCAT\(2018\)08](#) concept note [APCAT\(2018\)04](#) and draft agenda [AP/CAT\(2018\)06](#).

T. Chelidze also cited the problem of press predictions which could potentially provoke a panicked response and thereby prove to be more disastrous. He stressed on the reliability of predictions as a necessity. Although A. Micallef found the approach to risk as detailed by F. Ferrigni innovative, in terms of support to protecting landscapes, the conference did not mention the economic value of the landscapes. Also, a scenic evaluation should be made to determine its economic value to help planners and decision-makers and to generate support in conservation due to the inherent value they represent. F. Ferrigni mentioned that these factors were taken into account in their work with UNESCO, e.g. the cultivation of terraces which is a very expensive venture and is therefore politically sensitive. One of the action plans is to recover abandoned terraces in order to restore the landscape, maintain the soil and protect it from landslides as the economic aspects, although fundamental are not the only criteria. G. Silvestrini suggested possible collaboration between member States through the testing of different pilot projects by facilitating and enhancing experience sharing internationally

e.g. GHHD's landslides early warning system. S. Badalyan stressed the importance of cultural heritage citing as an example the negative impact of tourism which could accentuate the phenomenon of landslides. G. Silvestrini added that this point was highlighted during the workshop in Ravello by CoE colleagues who deal with the landscape convention ([link to CUEBC presentation](#)).

#### **Projet: Seismic Studies Based on Data from the Luxembourg National Seismic Network (2018 )**

**A. Oth (ECGS, Luxembourg)** presented the activities of the 2018 project. He spoke about the previous project's approach and techniques focusing on the Congo because there is no similar seismic activity in Europe. There is a low probability of seismic activity in Luxembourg but it is important to include it in the European monitoring system to fill in the gap. Luxembourg is rich in quarries and majority of the type of seismic activity is mostly linked to quarry blasts; 194 in the last 2 years (40000 in the Congo). T. Chelidze commented on how human activity could also trigger seismic activity and noted that networking between member States was vital ([Link to ECGS presentation](#)).

#### **Projet: Hazard & vulnerability assessment – the path to identifying Risk Beach and Coastal Resorts Risks**

**A. Micallef (ICoD, Msida)** summarised the hazard and vulnerability assessment project which is geared towards risk mapping in prone areas. The project identifies hazard and susceptibility to coastal erosion and produces maps of different shorelines; categorising the coastline in 6 groups according to susceptibility to coastal erosion. ICoD uses the UN hazard wheel to show different types of shores, tidal and wave exposure, storm climate and vegetation as well as parameters that influence coastal erosion. In addition, ICoD partnered with BeSafeNet (Nicosia) to prepare the 2019 Olympiad, CERU (Lisbon) on the Beach and Coastal Risk Project and contributed to CEMEC's (San Marino) AIDYOU mobile app project. In 2019 the project will include establishment of tsunami ready beach for the Ports authorities of Maltese Islands ([Link to ICoD presentation](#)).

#### **Projet: Beach and Coastal Resorts Risks**

**N. Jabour (CEPRIS, Rabat)** explained that the Beach and Coastal Risks project aimed to educate the population about tsunami hazards and evacuation procedures. The project was carried out in collaboration with CERU (Portugal) and ICoD (Malta). CEPRIS is also the official centre for tsunami warnings and collaborates with UNESCO. They were able to better detect tsunami behaviour and the predicted effect of higher magnitude tsunamis. There was good cooperation between government bodies and the hope for improved communication between the centres and local population in 2019. CEPRIS also worked with schools and organised visits to their observatory for school groups ([Link to CEPRIS presentation](#)).

#### **Projet: Beach and Coastal Resorts Risks**

**P. De Teves Costa (CERU, Lisbon)** highlighted CERU's aim to contact the local population and tourists in case of earthquakes and tsunamis. To this end, several information sessions were organised for the general public on beach risks. A seminar was also held in a small coastal town (Cascais County) with the participation of local and international experts, institutions, life guards associations, tourism agents, hotels etc. Participants learned how to react in the event of an earthquake or tsunami. CERU also evaluated signalling warning knowledge which was disseminated to schools, hotel schools and shopping centres. They produced tsunami informative and educational leaflets showing evacuation routes in Portuguese and English. In 2019, CERU will produce and disseminate more leaflets and organise events in other local communities. G. Silvestrini stressed the need to ensure earthquake and tsunami prone areas in Europe remain in a state of readiness as well as the necessity to establish prevention measures in member States ([link to CERU presentation](#)).

#### **Projet: Seismic risk preparedness and disaster risk reduction – DRR training for vulnerable groups of populations, school students and volunteers in neighborhoods in Romania**

**E-S. Georgescu (ECBR, Romania)** presented the risks associated with buildings which are not sufficiently reinforced to withstand seismic risk. This was all the more significant given that there are ca. 350 high-rise buildings constructed before 1940 in seismic high risk areas. ECBR organised DRR training on preparedness, coping with disasters and behaviour during hazards to improve evacuation. He stressed the need for further training to strengthen cooperation and participation by the local population. The training took place in neighbourhoods with traditional and vulnerable buildings in Romania and also in

Moldova. ECBR aims to organise a project workshop in October 2019 in collaboration with ECRP (Greece), ECMNR (Moldova) and Greece with a view to increasing knowledge of citizens and encouraging proactive behaviour in the event of a hazard ([link to ECBR presentation](#)).

**Projet: Technologies for collective processing of spatial data to identify threats of natural and manmade nature**

**S. Kachanov (ECNTRM, Moscow)** focused on data collection and analysis of various threats in order to increase public awareness and ensure better civil protection. This entailed involving the population in preventive action against threats, in education and response to emergency situations. He gave an example; professional terminology used by fire fighters is not easily understood by the local populace but the idea is to have a database of notes, information with all the signs, explanations of signals for the local populace to easily understand. Other activities involved technology of collecting and processing information from social media and defending the population from fake news. In 2019, ECNTRM hopes to cooperate on processing information of specialist data in order to establish an information portal. i.e., spatial data processing of information gathered by local people e.g. information on forest fires threat that would help to identify the risks especially in areas where local authorities are not able to provide such information, thereby involving the local populace in prevention. At this point, T. Chelidze signalled his interest to collaborate on satellite coverage of local hazards e.g. receiver operating classification used in medical diagnostics ([link to ECNTRM presentation](#)).

**Projet: Immediate migrants resource and tool**

**A. Balducci, E. Bernini Carri (CEMEC, San Marino)** developed an app in 2017 for immigrants in English and Arabic. In 2018, CEMEC introduced the AIDYOU app in 5 languages for the general population and tourists and it can be downloaded from Google Play or Apple Play. The app was officially launched in Rimini (Italy) and posters were displayed all over the city – Rimini welcomes one million tourists yearly. In 2019 CEMEC will focus on further developing the app expanding its use by including the ability to choose whichever emergency service required. G. Silvestrini stressed the importance of the app for migrants and the different methodologies which are all relevant and could be shared and used in the different member States.

J. Isgandarli asked if the app could be open to translation into other languages and used at national level ([link to CEMEC presentation1](#) / [presentation 2](#)).

**Projets: Identification of good governance practices in the management of nuclear disasters and cross-border technology (2018)**

**International Workshop on Strengthening the Role of Local Authorities to Build Disaster Resilient Communities (2018)**

**Short Film Competition on “Disasters and Disability” (2018)**

**Y. Teker, (AFEM, Ankara)** Shared information about a high-level workshop held on 10-11 May 2018 in Kocaeli, Turkey to raise awareness on the UNISDR “Making Cities Resilient” campaign. The participants primarily focused on finding solutions to the various problems encountered whilst implementing to campaign actions e.g., legislation, capacity, information, training and exercise, etc., through sharing examples of good practices. AFEM produced a best practices booklet in Turkish and English. AFEM also collaborated with V. Poyarkov (Ukraine) on the translation of the booklet “Nuclear Hazards: Lessons from Chernobyl and Fukushima” into Turkish ([Link to AFEM presentation](#)).

**Project: Development of the “Methodology and Action plan to prepare and regularly hold national and municipal “Campaigns” on informing, awareness raising, acquisition and consolidation of adequate behaviour skills and warning for all groups of the population**

**S. Badalyan (ECRM, Yerevan)** summarised the activities of the project on the establishment of regional and municipal programmes with proper regional campaigns consolidating competencies and informing the public about emergencies at local and national level. The campaigns take several years to put together and are conducted in high risk municipalities (earthquakes, radioactive risks). The municipalities require planning, training, implementation and assessment as well as information and educational materials (leaflets, brochures). The project phase results include awareness-raising of families about disasters, risks scenarios, mechanisms for assistance, etc. Problems still exist as regards cross border cooperation, increasing municipal participation, migrants and refugees participation, most vulnerable categories of population, tourists etc. In addition, the Constitution does not detail how to help the population in the event of natural disasters. 2019

activities would include a comprehensive educational programme on radio activity and developing iodine prophylaxis procedures in collaboration with V. Poyarkov.

### **Project: Management of Nuclear Disasters**

**V. Poyarkov (Kiev)** developed a questionnaire listing key problems in nuclear disaster management programmes in the member States and highlighted issues such as the importance of cross border cooperation. He summarised recommendations made at national level and invited collaboration on developing an iodine prophylaxis for nuclear emergency through an international working group in 2019 ([Link to presentation](#)).

At the end of the presentations, G. Silvestrini thanked all the Directors of the Centres for their excellent work and made the following recommendations for future presentations:

- The need for presentations to be brief (maximum 7 minutes);
- provide less information on the process but more emphasis on final results, how to apply results, the final outcome, beneficiary targets, etc. This information is primarily for the benefit of Permanent Correspondents;
- structure presentations around target groups, citizens, politicians, guidelines, tools and/or recommendations, underline how results can translate policies and strategies;
- seek ways to address the gap between scientists and politicians (UN, EU, etc), policy and decision makers. A. Freitas reiterated the importance of this point due to the interest of the national authorities in knowing and fully comprehending the benefits or added value of their EUR-OPA membership.

➤ **Decisions:**

- A standardised template for the Directors' presentations of projects will be provided by the Secretariat.
- The Directors will send to the Secretariat, if they have not done so, their 2018 narrative and financial reports using the reporting templates by the end of November 2018.
- They will also send to the Secretariat their project proposals for 2019 regardless of the budget situation by beginning of December 2018.
- The CPC will discuss the format of the 2019 Joint Meeting during their separate Session on 7 November.

## **Wednesday 7 November**

### **Operational Activities:**

#### **Vulnerable Groups and Risk Management: Children/Teenagers and DRR:**

- Collaboration with the Council of Europe Education Department on the BeSafeNet project
- Organisation of the Olympiad on knowledge of Natural and Technological disasters
- Change of title of the BeSafeNet Centre

Participants were informed about the preparation of activities targeting secondary school students in the EUR-OPA member States. P. Cadeac presented the state of preparation of the 2019 Olympiad and the collaboration with the CoE Education Department. Some participants indicated that they had translated and disseminated the competition invitation. Registration opened on 15 October 2018.

➤ **Decisions:**

- The title of the Centre from Cyprus was changed for European Centre for Disaster Awareness (BeSafeNet), removing the terminology "use of internet" in the former name.
- The Directors of Centres and Permanent Correspondents will disseminate the information about the Competition to their national authorities and their network in order to have a fairly expanded geographical spread.

- Workshop on Beach and Coastal Risks:

The workshop was organised by the Euro-Mediterranean Centre on Insular Coastal Dynamics (Malta, 24 September 2018) in the framework of the two-year project initiative entitled Beach and Coastal Resort Risks. While this project aims to develop and implement seismic and tsunami coastal risks mitigation in general, it intends to contribute in particular, to the establishment of a Tsunami Ready Community via the introduction of the Tsunami Ready Beach and Tsunami Ready Hotel concepts in Malta, Portugal and Morocco. The project is creating opportunities for strengthening cooperation with UNESCO, the blue flag programme, civil protection and many other stakeholders. ([link to the presentation](#)).

### **Cultural Heritage and Risk Management:**

- International Conference on “Culture against Disasters: protecting cultural landscape as prevention of natural disasters” (Ravello, Italy, 28-29 September 2018): *meeting report APCAT(2018)08 concept note APCAT(2018)04 Draft Agenda AP/CAT(2018)06*.

Participants were informed about the conclusions of the conference by F. Ferrigni (see detailed item 3.3).

- Collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Intercultural cities programme of the Council of Europe on an e-learning tool for local authorities.

P. Cadeac informed the participants that the joint compilation of good practices on Migrants and Disaster Risk Reduction was now available in French. She presented the IOM e-learning tool for local authorities completed with the support of EUR-OPA and the Intercultural Cities Programme (ICC). The tool targets local emergency or disaster risk management agencies and non-governmental actors working in this field to help them better include migrants in emergency management. This activity represented one of EUR-OPA’s goals to establish synergies with other international organisations in DRR.

- European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction, Rome, Italy, 21-23 November 2018: *EFDRR Concept Note and Draft Agenda*

G. Silvestrini informed the participants about the preparation of the European Forum under the Italian Chairmanship and presented the concept note and the programme. Along with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and the European Union, EUR-OPA makes up the Secretariat of the Forum dedicated this year to the economic impact of disasters. Discussions will be built around 3 or 4 key questions followed by debate among the participants. EUR-OPA is contributing to the following sessions:

- Every life counts: inclusive and equality based strategies;
- Reducing risk to cultural heritage;
- Gender sensitive DRR;
- Addressing the Grey Rhino (recognize and act on obvious risks) and the Black Swan (unexpected events of large magnitude and consequence ): From risk assessments to understanding and communicating risk;

F. Ferrigni, A. Micallef, A. Freitas, J. Isgandarli would attend the EFDRR on behalf of EUR-OPA.

Several Permanent Correspondents informed the group that they will also attend and mention EUR-OPA common goals/work:

- S. Georgiou, Mr. Tafiylis (CPC, Greece) with the Director General of the National and Local Strategies Target (Cyprus).
- E N. Holcinger (Croatia).
- S. Agic, CPC Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- D. Reynolds (CPC Slovak Republic) will moderate the Grey Rhino and Black Swan session.

J. Goldammer proposed to organise a side event at next year’s forum in Geneva. S. Badalyan suggested looking into collaboration on landlocked countries increased vulnerability in disasters before the Geneva EFDRR.

➤ **Decisions:**

- Permanent Correspondents and Directors of Centres attending the EFDRR will use this opportunity to raise EUR-OPA's profile. EUR-OPA visibility material will be displayed.
- In view of the next Global Forum on DRR in Geneva on 13-17 May 2019, the Secretariat will follow-up on the organisation of a side-event to give visibility to the Agreement.
- Countries/centres are invited to express their interest as regards landlocked countries vulnerability to be suggested for the next Forum.

#### **4. EVALUATION OF EUR-OPA WORK**

The CoE Committee of Ministers (CM) requires an assessment of the impact of EUR-OPA's work, in particular the impact of the recommendations and guidelines on national legislation, policies and strategies.

In this context, a survey was launched in 2018 by the Secretariat, to gauge the effectiveness of EUR-OPA instruments in member States. P.Cadeac explained the aims and presented the results of the survey (refer to [AP/CAT\(2018\)10](#)). Most of the participating countries underlined the importance of these texts to support the preparation of DRR strategies by feeding into the political discussions and stimulating innovative change to legislation. The survey also aimed to guide EUR-OPA to utilise its limited resources more efficiently and guide the preparation of future action plans.

S. Badalyan explained his involvement as a national expert on the revision of Armenia's constitution. This discussion is detailed in item 9.

#### **5. TRAINING FOR DIRECTORS OF SPECIALISED CENTRES**

##### **Presentation of the collaborative platform for the specialised centres**

P. Cadeac presented the new online platform to the participants. The primary purpose of the EUR-OPA platform is to:

- improve visibility and to present and link all the projects on one webpage;
- facilitate and harmonise the submission of project proposals;
- standardise financial and narrative reporting;
- facilitate management of these processes;
- limit exchanges of emails;
- overall greater efficiency using available technology and also in light of reduced staffing;
- improve connectivity and sharing of information between EUR-OPA centres and other experts/scientific/academic networks;
- Possibility to filter information by theme, centre and countries.

F. Ferrigni suggested adopting a common approach and methodology for the definition of relevant indicators for EUR-OPA. Indicators should be designed to assess the effectiveness of projects and ascertain if recommendations are being taken into account by the national authorities.

➤ **Decision :**

- The database will be used by the Directors to post their project proposals once finalised and agreed upon as a practice exercise. Information will be sent to the Directors by the Secretariat by the end of the year.
- The Secretariat will follow-up with interested countries and Directors of Centres on the definition of indicators.

**Recall of the financial and administrative rules of the Council of Europe:** Directors of Specialised Centres were reminded about the rules concerning project submission as well as financial and narrative reporting requirements by C. Emezie ([AP/CAT\(2017\)13](#)).

#### **6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None

#### **7. DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING:**

➤ **Decision**

- The provisional dates chosen for the meeting are 5-6 November 2019.
- The Secretariat will decide the venue of the next Joint Meeting; Paris or Strasbourg, in liaison with the Chair.

## **SESSION FOR THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT CORRESPONDENTS**

### **8. RESTRUCTURING EUR-OPA**

G. Silvestrini proposed, in consultation with the Chair, to move item 7 scheduled in the afternoon to the morning Session in order to allow Directors of Centres to participate in the debate. He also invited interested Directors of Specialised Centres to attend the afternoon session (initially for CPC members only) if they wished.

Participants were invited to discuss the measures to adapt EUR-OPA activities and working methods to the reduced resources. *AP/CAT(2018)05*. G. Silvestrini presented a draft document for discussion, revision and amendment by the participants. The main proposals discussed were:

- The funding mechanism of projects has to be reconsidered. Funding should be allocated to a reduced number of projects in line with priority topics identified by Permanent Correspondents.
- Several Centres could simultaneously cooperate on such projects.
- CPC members could be identified as "Ambassadors" of projects in order to ensure political relevance and a stronger impact.
- Expertise to address the priority issues identified by CPCs can be found externally when it is not available in the network of Specialised Centres. This will widen options, bring more flexibility and responsiveness to challenges.

G. Silvestrini clarified the decision-making process within EUR-OPA. The priorities are decided at the ministerial level. A medium term plan was adopted in Lisbon in 2016 for four years. The activities of EUR-OPA are designed in the framework of this text. In 2019, the Permanent Correspondents will be responsible for starting off discussions about the future priority actions of the Agreement in view of the next Ministerial meeting.

He recalled the political nature of the Council of Europe, to be taken into account while designing projects. He asked the CPC to take advantage of their participation in other international events to better identify a niche for EUR-OPA.

Priority topics were identified by CPCs and Directors:

- Strengthen the interface between science and policy-making (Greece).
- Fires and vulnerable groups (Greece and Albania).
- Floods (Albania).
- Fires and floods are of common interest for many countries in the region, therefore collaboration with neighbouring countries should be strengthened (Albania). Albania's scientific centre could join the network of EUR-OPA Specialised Centres so as to bring its expertise in this matter.
- Risk culture (Italy): F. Ferrigni proposed to build a global project on local risk culture including in schools, building on previous project results and make a call for contributions and collaboration in this matter.

➤ **Decision:**

- The Permanent Correspondents are invited to pay a visit to their Permanent Representative to the CoE, during a meeting in Strasbourg, to speak about EUR-OPA and its relevance for their countries.
- Albania will identify a national Specialised Centre and inform the Secretariat. As the budget situation is not clarified yet, the Centres should send their project proposals for 2019 as usual. In addition, one global project could be identified and financed as a test.
- All evidence of impact of the EUR-OPA activities should be shared with the group and the Secretariat to give them visibility and reflect the effectiveness of the work programme.

## 9. PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES 2019

### Proposed activities for 2019

CPC Members were invited to propose and comment on activities for 2019.

#### **Vulnerable Groups and Risk Management:**

- Follow up of the cooperation with IOM and ICC on e-learning tool for local authorities.
- Collaboration with the Council of Europe Education Department on the BeSafeNet project.
- Organisation of the Olympiad on knowledge of Natural and Technological disasters.

These items were covered in item 4.

#### **Environment, Climate Change and Risk Management:**

- Development of synergies on climate change between the Bern Convention and EUR-OPA.

G. Silvestrini informed the Permanent Correspondents of the results of a study led by an external consultant to help identify a niche and possible synergies with the Environmental Unit on climate change.

#### **Cultural Heritage and Risk Management:**

- Follow-up of the Workshop on "Culture against Disasters; protecting cultural landscape as prevention of natural disasters".
- Research and recommendations on heritage and community-based approach for risk reduction.

These items were covered in item 4.

#### **Governance and legislation**

- Recommendation and guidelines on innovative legislation

G. Silvestrini called the Permanent Correspondents to suggest activities for 2019.

Vulnerable groups: J. Isgandarli proposed to organise an event on vulnerable groups in partnership with other stakeholders. This would give visibility to the projects on this matter.

#### ➤ **Decision :**

J. Isgandarli will propose a concept note for the event with the support of the Secretariat as a basis for brainstorming and fundraising.

Integration of protection in case of disaster in legislations: S. Badalyan explained his involvement as a national expert on the revision of Armenia's constitution, specifically on the mitigation of disasters which also concerns human rights, health, role of the state actors (parliament and government) in natural disasters to control and manage these events, remove the threat and safeguard human rights of citizens. The Stockholm Agreement proposals will form the basis of legislation and will share the findings with EUR-OPA. He proposed to see if other countries would have an interest in this matter

#### ➤ **Decision:**

This topic will be revisited next year.

## 10. BUDGET FOR 2018-2019

### **Criteria for Sponsorship of Member States' Participation in CPC meetings:**

G. Silvestrini recalled that this document had been presented to the CPC at the previous meeting.

#### ➤ **Decision:**

CPC upheld that a flexible approach as regards to Sponsorship of Member States' Participation in CPC meetings should be maintained.

**C. Emezie** presented the 2018 and 2019 budget adopted by the CM; [AP/CAT\(2018\)09](#) for information and [AP/CAT\(2018\)11](#) including, in particular, the revised figures as regards the withdrawal of Turkey from EUR-OPA. She also drew the attention of the participants to the share of the Russian Federation in the budget amounting to 45 %.

G. Silvestrini explained the possibility for the countries to make a voluntary contribution for specific purposes or projects.

### **11. MAINSTREAMING GENDER EQUALITY IN EUR-OPA ACTIVITIES**

The document on proposals to mainstream gender equality in the EUR-OPA programme [AP/CAT\(2018\)13](#) was presented by Jeyhun Isgandarli, EUR-OPA Gender Rapporteur, and the proposals were discussed.

The aim of this activity is to mainstream gender equality in EUR-OPA activities.

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| <p>➤ <b>Decision</b> : A section providing gender-related information and documents should be created on EUR-OPA website</p> |
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### **12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

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

G. Silvestrini explained that one of the two Bureau meetings could be organised by means of teleconference in order to save money.

The participants discussed the opportunity of organising again the next CPC meeting jointly with the Directors of the Specialised Centres.

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| <p>➤ <b>Decision</b><br/>The CPC agreed to maintain a joint meeting on 5-7 November 2019 to be held in Paris or Strasbourg.</p> |
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