

THE CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

Recommendation 168 (2005)¹ on natural and industrial disasters: local authorities facing emergencies

The Congress, bearing in mind the proposal of the Chamber of Local Authorities,

1. Concerned at the frequency and scale of natural disasters and major hazards, which, as was the case in Southeast Asia, may cost hundreds of thousands of lives;
2. Aware that, although natural disasters are usually unpredictable and unavoidable, it is none the less possible to reduce their harmful consequences by taking appropriate action at the different stages: prevention, information on risks, information on the disasters themselves, organisational preparedness, emergency relief;
3. Convinced that local authorities must be capable of responding to such situations, which require them to react appropriately in terms of prevention, immediate response, health and security measures and civil protection;
4. Having adopted Resolution 200 (2005) on natural and industrial disasters: local authorities facing emergencies, and a handbook setting out forty measures which local authorities can take to deal with emergencies created by natural disasters,

5. Calls on the governments of member states to:

- a.* set up programmes to promote greater public awareness of the importance of prevention and, hence, of the contribution that a “risk culture” can make;
- b.* disseminate this recommendation as widely as possible to local authorities, if necessary after translating it into their country’s language;
- c.* give high priority to co-operation in this field, so that management of emergencies can be optimised through co-ordination of the services involved at various levels and a multidisciplinary approach, in particular through the implementation by the European Network of Training Organisations for Local and Regional Authorities (ENTO) of training for territorial representatives programmes, above all with a view to limiting the loss of human lives and material damage;

6. Calls on the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to:

- a.* take note of Resolution 200 (2005);
- b.* request the relevant Council of Europe bodies, in particular the Open Partial Agreement on Major Hazards (EUR-OPA), to promote the handbook and urge them to enhance their activities in this field.

1. Debated and approved by the Chamber of Local Authorities on 31 May 2005 and adopted by the Standing Committee of the Congress on 2 June 2005 (see Document CPL (12) 2, draft recommendation presented by C. Filippone (Italy, L, EPP/CD) and R. Sinoyan (Armenia, R, EPP/CD), rapporteurs).

