



COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE



Strasbourg, 14 April 2008

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Or. E

MEMORANDUM OF CO-OPERATION

between

the Council of Europe and the Secretariat of the International
Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR)

signed in Paris, France on 24th April 2008

The Secretary General of the Council of Europe

and

the Director of the Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR)

(hereinafter referred to as the "Organisations");

Considering that the Council of Europe has been developing work in disaster risk reduction for twenty years in the framework of the European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement (EUR-OPA), both for its member States and for other States having acceded to the Partial Agreement after the establishment through Resolution (87) 2 of the Committee of Ministers of a Co-operation Group for the Prevention of, Protection against, and Organisation of Relief in Major Natural and Technological Disasters;

Recalling that work in this field was encouraged by the Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe, meeting in Warsaw on 16 and 17 May 2005, as they expressed their commitment to strengthen the security of European citizens, outlining an action plan in which the Council of Europe was asked to further develop and support integrated policies in the field of prevention and management of natural disasters in a sustainable development perspective;

Recalling that at the 11th Ministerial Session of the European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement (EUR-OPA) held in Marrakech (Morocco) on 31 October 2006, the Ministers resolved to promote that disaster risk reduction becomes a national and local priority, *inter alia*, by strengthening national mechanisms, the integration of risk reduction in development and planning policies and the setting up and reinforcement, where necessary, of early warning systems. The 2007-2011 Medium Term Plan adopted by the Ministers is in line with UN priorities and co-operation of Council of Europe with ISDR is a condition for its successful implementation;

Recognising that in adopting plans for the follow-up to the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (1990-1999), the United Nations General Assembly established in 2000 the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) aiming at building disaster resilient communities by promoting increased awareness of the importance of disaster risk reduction as an integral component of sustainable development, with the goal of reducing human, social, economic and environmental losses due to natural hazards and related technological and environmental disasters;

Considering that the UN/ISDR has as its main objectives to increase public awareness in order to reduce the risk of natural hazards; to obtain the commitment of the public authorities; to foster interdisciplinary and intersectoral work associations, and expand networks for disaster risk reduction at all levels; to improve scientific knowledge on the causes of disaster and the effect of natural hazards, as well as those of technological and environmental disasters in societies;

Recalling that the World Conference on Disaster Reduction held at Kobe, Hyogo in Japan from 18 to 22 January 2005, in conformity with General Assembly Resolution 58/214 of 23 December 2003, adopted with Resolution 2 The Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters;

Considering that the Council of Europe and UN/ISDR Secretariat have been collaborating for seven years in disaster risk reduction in Europe. The co-operation, though fruitful, has lacked a precise framework for its development that would permit a more politically visible and efficient use of the strengths and synergies of both Organisations. Following the aforementioned 2005 World Conference on Disaster Reduction, there is a new role for regional organisations in implementing UN priorities in disaster risk reduction that the Council of Europe has interest in pursuing to improve its work on this field;

Wishing to establish a tighter framework of co-operation in disaster risk reduction permitting the synergy of the strengths and expertise of both Organisations to be increased in this field;

Have agreed as follows:

Article 1 — Objective

The objective of this Memorandum of Co-operation is to establish a working framework to organise and develop collaboration between the Council of Europe and the UN/ISDR, oriented towards achieving regional support for disaster risk reduction.

Article 2 — Principles and modalities of co-operation

Co-operation between both Organisations shall be based on the principles of reciprocity and complementarity.

Subject to their mandates, rules, regulations and procedures, and within the limits of the resources available, co-operation between both Organisations will take in particular the following modalities:

- a. inviting each Organisation as appropriate to contribute to the formulation of the other's strategies, assessment, analysis and development of disaster risk reduction policies;
- b. organising conferences, round tables, meetings and workshops on themes mutually agreed to;
- c. identifying and developing joint projects that can be included in their respective programme of activities;
- d. the systematic exchange of relevant reports, studies and other documents, information and data on matters of common interest that have been made public by the Organisations;
- e. under the rules and procedures in force in each Organisation, inviting each other to attend the meetings of their respective committees, working groups and other structures (at regional and country levels as appropriate) related to policies in promotion of disaster risk reduction;
- f. arrangements to facilitate mutual representation at appropriate conferences, meetings, seminars, symposia and workshops convened by either Organisation or under their auspices;
- g. stimulating exchanges and initiatives among the specialised Centres and scientific community part of the EUR-OPA Major Hazards Agreement and the worldwide regional collaborative Centres of the ISDR.
- h. undertaking such other activities as may be agreed upon between the Organisations.

Nothing of this Memorandum of Co-operation shall prejudice the respective relations of both Organisations with other international or regional organisations that have similar mandates.

Article 3 — Areas of co-operation

Both Organisations have identified for the period 2007-2011 the following areas of co-operation:

- a. reduction of vulnerability, risk mapping, and early warning;
- b. establishment, strengthening and networking of national platforms for disaster risk reduction in the member states of the Council of Europe to reduce vulnerability and the risks of disasters;
- c. education and knowledge on disaster risk reduction;
- d. mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction into sustainable development plans and initiatives;
- e. ensure follow-up on reporting of information on achievements in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) through national platforms and/or Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) focal points.

Article 4 — Implementation, co-ordination and follow up

This Memorandum of Co-operation will be implemented by each Organisation, in accordance with its rules, regulations and decisions of its governmental organs.

The Council of Europe and UN/ISDR undertake to hold periodic consultations and exchange of information concerning their respective work programmes, notably through:

- a. The organisation, where necessary, of meetings, including at a high level, to:
 - exchange information concerning respective priority areas of work and major concerns, and where possible, to formulate common approaches to these;
 - identify joint projects and activities which could be included in their respective Programme of Activities,
 - review work jointly implemented.
- b. The appointment of a Secretariat official as contact point in each Organisation to:
 - facilitate access to information concerning activities, resource persons and documentation;
 - channel invitations to participate in meetings and events
 - follow up the activities developed in the framework of this Memorandum of Co-operation.

Article 5 — Budgetary Issues

Any possible financial obligations imposed on the Organisations as a result of this Memorandum of Co-operation shall be subject to the decisions of their respective governmental bodies and/or senior authorities, the availability of funding and the guidelines, rules and regulations pertaining to budgetary and financial issues of each Organisation.

Article 6 — Amendment and termination

This Memorandum of Co-operation may be amended by mutual agreement using an exchange of letters. Such amendments shall come into force on the day they are signed by the two Organisations. The amendments shall be appended to this Memorandum of Co-operation and form an integral part of it.

The Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the Director of the UN/ISDR may terminate this Memorandum of Co-operation by giving a six-month written notice to the other Organisation.

Article 7 — Entry into force

This Memorandum of Co-operation shall come into force on signature by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the Director of the UN/ISDR and shall be extended automatically every twelve months unless one of the signatories indicates otherwise in writing.

Signatures

Signed in Paris, France, on this twenty-fourth day of April 2008

For the Council of Europe:

For the International
Strategy for Disaster
Reduction:

On behalf of the Secretary General
of the Council of Europe

Mr. Sálvano Briceño
The UN/ISDR Director

Mr. Eladio Fernández-Galiano
Executive Secretary of the European
and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement
(EUR-OPA)

Signature: _____

Signature: _____