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EUROPEAN AND MEDITERRANEAN MAJOR HAZARDS AGREEMENT
(EUR-OPA)

57th MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT CORRESPONDENTS

15 - 16 October 2009

Hotel Bellevue, Dubrovnik, CROATIA

CONCLUSIONS

The participants (see appendix 1) were welcomed by Mr. Damir Trut, Director of the Croatian National Protection and Rescue Directorate. In his opening address Mr. Trut underlined that Dubrovnik has suffered from earthquakes and has survived due to the measures adopted to face them over the past centuries. This fact illustrates the importance of systematically including Disaster Risk Reduction in policies and Croatia is taking steps towards the creation of a National Platform including all actors in the area. He also emphasized that Croatia is proud to be an active member of the EUR-OPA Agreement and looks forward to an increased involvement.

The Chair of the Committee of Permanent Correspondents, Mr. Iuliu Bara, acknowledged their commitment to disaster risk prevention co-operation and emphasized the importance of the meeting in view of the forthcoming Ministerial Session. In addition he wished to warmly welcome the Serbian delegation for their first participation as a member State of the Agreement.

1. ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT AGENDA

The agenda was adopted without amendments (see Appendix 2)

2. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIR, DELEGATIONS AND EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

- Information by the Executive Secretariat

After thanking the Croatian authorities for their hospitality, the Executive Secretary recalled the main conclusions of the last meeting of the Committee in Paris and emphasized the importance of the Serbian accession to the Agreement for consolidating international initiatives in the Balkan region. The Executive Secretary also hoped that the expressions of interest received from other countries in that region will materialize into formal accession requests in a near future.

Concerning the wish of Belarus to accede to the Agreement, the Secretariat informed the delegates that due to its political implications the request has been evaluated by the GR-Dem of the Council of Europe and no objections were raised to a possible accession of Belarus to the Agreement. The request now remains to be formally accepted by the Committee of Ministers.

The Executive Secretary informed the participants of the election of a new Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Mr. Thorbjørn Jagland (Norway). He also stressed how climate change is increasing vulnerability and consequently the importance of prevention in view of the recent disasters in Europe.

- Presentation by the Serbian delegation

In the name of his Government and of Assistant Minister of the Interior, Mr. Predrag Maric, the Serbian delegate, Mr. Djordje Babic, reiterated his country's satisfaction on its accession to the Agreement. In his speech, Mr. Babic informed the participants on Serbia's present Civil Protection structure. In 2009 an integrated Sector for Emergency Management within the Ministry of the Interior was set up to federate the different governmental departments dealing with the various phases of risk management. To provide it with a legal framework, a new law on Emergency Situations and Civil Protection was drafted and a national strategy together with associated local and regional strategies for disaster risk reduction had been developed. As bilateral agreements with neighbouring countries are in progress, Serbia has a keen interest to develop activities within the framework of the EUR-OPA Agreement.

The detailed presentation of the Sector of Emergency Management by Ms. Radmila Randjelovic was followed by an exchange of questions and answers between participants and the Serbian delegation. The Chair thanked Mr. Babic and Ms. Randjelovic for their informative presentation and the Executive Secretary highlighted the importance of such presentations by new members States as a means of informing other members of a country's specific institutional context.

3. INVOLVEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES

- Participation in the 2nd Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (Geneva, 16-19 June 2009)

The Executive Secretary reviewed the main conclusions of the 2nd Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction (Geneva, 15-19 June 2009) which evaluated the advancement in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action. To enable a common view of disaster risk reduction to be shared, reports from European countries were compiled in the publication "Implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action in Europe: Advances and Challenges (report for the period 2007-2009) prepared in collaboration with the EUR-OPA Agreement and DKKV.

The Belgian delegate, Mrs. Monique Bernaerts, enquired upon a possible overlap of activities with the European Union and the Commission on this topic. The Executive Secretary remarked that a constant effort is made and great vigilance is paid to ensuring that duplication of activities does not arise. He recalled the communications produced by the EU result mainly from "stakeholders meetings", a mechanism different from that used by ISDR and EUR-OPA .

The ISDR representative, Mr. Demetrio Innocenti, confirmed his Organisation's productive collaboration with the DG Environment – Civil Protection of the European Commission and confirmed the Commission's participation in the forthcoming London meeting in November, whose updated agenda is available on the ISDR web site.

The Chair recalled that the obligations coming from different organizations have to be consolidated and that the Agreement should follow this issue closely.

- Development of the network of European national platforms for disaster risk reduction

Following the discussions during the special session on National Platforms held in Bonn last spring, the idea to promote a more formal European Platform in order to foster the setting up of such national platforms emerged. Since the Bonn meeting, countries such as Croatia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia have developed National Platforms. An important meeting will be held in London in mid November.

Along that line, ISDR is currently updating the guidelines for national platforms and communicated a collection of experiences. The training package developed has also been used at the lately Pula meeting at the sub-regional level.

- Role and activities of the Arab Bureau of Civil Protection and Rescue

The Executive Secretariat informed the participants that the Arab Bureau of Civil Protection and Rescue had formally apologised for not being able to attend the meeting. They confirmed their interest in the work of the Agreement and expressed the wish to be kept informed on the progress of activities. The Executive Secretariat and the Chair hoped to welcome the Arab Bureau to a future meeting of the Committee.

- Cooperation with the Group of European Municipalities with Nuclear Facilities

The Executive Secretary confirmed that collaboration with local and regional authorities is one of the Agreement's constant concerns. He recalled the two workshops organised in 2008 in Istanbul and in Kiev on the role of local and regional authorities in risks.

The Kiev workshop had focused on radiological risks and the Ukrainian delegate, Mr. Victor Poyarkov, explained that a privileged partner had been found in the Group of European Municipalities with Nuclear Facilities (GMF). Its president, Mr. Roland Palmqvist, presented the association which includes over 120 municipalities from 14 different countries and through this international co-operation it wishes to increase local democracy in nuclear facilities management. Apart from technical meetings and participation in international fora on the topic, they develop local competence building among its members. Mr. Palmqvist recalled the conclusions of the Task Force meeting: better awareness and information can benefit from common international activities. It has also led to the request of Ukraine to join GMF.

The Belgian delegate enquired about the promotion of the concrete actions identified at the 2008 workshop and insisted on the proper dissemination of the information and results to relay it to mayors to involve them at national level. Mr. Palmqvist explained that in 2008 the aim was to establish a network and run a programme on information to the inhabitants of each municipality. He agreed that transparency and the exchange of information between countries are vital and a key to building confidence on nuclear protection. He emphasized the experience of increasing competence of local authorities in the field as a useful preliminary step to fostering local democracy. The Ukrainian delegate pointed out that the implementation of activities requires funding. The Armenian delegate, Mr. Stepan Badalyan, also remarked on the importance of transnational co-operation between municipalities.

The Executive Secretary thanked Mr. Palmqvist for his interesting presentation and remarked that the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe has an important network which could be explored by the GMF. He added that the Agreement's knowledge also extends further than the borders of the European Union to include Lebanon, Algeria and Morocco and this could also be useful for the future promising work of the Ukrainian delegate and GMF. He confirmed that the Agreement is ready to support this activity.

4. PROGRESS OF 2009 ACTIVITIES

- European and Mediterranean Workshop on Climate change impact on water-related and marine risks (Murcia, Spain, 26-27 October 2009)

The Executive Secretariat gave an overview of the content of the workshop to be held in Murcia and organised jointly with the Spanish Authorities. He explained that it is crucial that the Agreement deals with climate change issues in risk management and pleaded for the lobbying of Permanent Correspondents at national level to have DRR included in the future adaptation agenda.

The different presentations and the final conclusions of the workshop will soon be posted on the Agreement's web site.

- Activities of the Working Groups

Working group on awareness and education to risk at school level (BE-SAFE-NET)

The Executive Secretariat informed on the advancement of the BE-SAFE-NET website. At its last meeting in Paphos (Cyprus) in April 2009, the group examined the technical aspects of the functioning of the site and the coordination of the material while the next meeting scheduled in November 2009 will be devoted to finalising the material on hazards to enable the web site to become operational in 2010, as the Cypriot delegate and coordinator of the BE-SAFE-NET website, Mr. Georges Gerosimou, confirmed. The Secretariat added that the working group intends to cover topics beyond hazards to enrich the site and then the different Civil Protection contributions would be highly welcomed.

Working group on the role of local and regional authorities in major hazard management

The Secretariat explained that the results achieved so far by the group have highlighted the importance of the role of local and regional authorities in an overall disaster risk reduction strategy. He thanked Cyprus and Croatia for their recent contribution and called upon all those countries who had not yet replied to do so. The delegate from Monaco, Mr. Tony Varo, confirmed his country's support for the work carried out and that after consultation with the various bodies, feedback will be given as soon as possible.

The Belgian delegate and coordinator of this group reminded that the objective is to regularly update each study on the future ISPU website and thus urged the countries to keep her informed of any national changes. The study so far has already identified some good practices (a dialogue between researchers and local authorities on drought in Algeria, educational material produced in campaigns on informing the population in Armenia, the interesting particularities in smaller countries such as Luxemburg).

The Armenian delegate pointed out the legal gaps existing and which prevent local authorities from imposing certain measures, for example upon industrialists who embark upon dangerous activities and who should be made to act with more responsibility. Mayors are not always prepared to take decisions (even if legally accountable).

Working group on cultural heritage and risk

The Executive Secretariat explained that past activities of the Specialised Centres in Athens, Ravello and Lisbon, mainly covering earthquake risks, are branching out to more general risks to the cultural heritage. He reminded the participants of the report commissioned in 2008 on the impact of climate change to the cultural heritage and informed about the workshop, "Climate change and cultural heritage", held in Ravello on 14-16 May 2009 where European scientists and policy makers discussed the impact of climate change on cultural heritage and presented results of current work and proposals for research and future co-operation in the field. This workshop gave rise to the draft recommendation on cultural heritage and climate change.

The Executive Secretariat gave a brief account of the European Master-Doctorate Course on "Vulnerability of cultural heritage to climate change" held at the Council of Europe's European Youth Centre in Strasbourg (7-11 September 2009). The course was a great success, with 40 participants (out of 80 applicants) and very interesting feedback from them. It gave the

opportunity for younger researchers to be informed and it promoted the emergence of new specialists. The Ravello Centre will produce a publication on the course for wider dissemination.

The French delegate stressed the importance of this activity and the dissemination of best practices to raise awareness and the publication of information on this important issue of heritage and risk. He also confirmed that such activities promoted international co-operation.

- Quick overview of activities of the Centres for 2009

As reports on 2009 activities financed within the grants are not yet available, the Executive Secretariat focused on the advancement of coordinated programmes on the following topics:

- *School education:* the main efforts had been devoted to finalising the BE-SAFE-NET content related to hazards (see above). Turkey is preparing a seminar to be held in November and Bulgaria is very active at school level and youth education.
- *University education:* a training course had been supported on climate change and cultural heritage (see above) and another training course on climate change and health and environmental effects will take place at the beginning of December in Strasbourg.
- *Professional education:* The Biarritz Centre is currently organising a course on marine risks in Biarritz which has met with an excellent response. The proceedings will be published and disseminated to widen the outreach and to create a multiplier effect.
- *Legislation/management:* a meeting held in Paris (11-12 June) elaborate further the contributions of six countries (France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Armenia, Algeria and Greece) and a new phase to collect additional national contributions was launched. Azerbaijan will be holding a national seminar on 20-21 October on the subject.
- *Prevention/information:* ongoing work by the Yerevan Centre on information campaigns and by the Sofia Centre on risks to the Danube has been continued; the Freiburg Centre will discuss a wild land fires in contaminated areas strategy in Kiev in early November.
- *Cultural heritage:* after the first meeting of the working group held in Athens, a workshop on climate change impact was held in Ravello on May 2009 (see above).
- *Post disaster actions:* the Moscow Centre continues to develop its EXTREMUM programme and permanent Correspondents are called upon to collaborate for data updating. The course on psychological support to victims to be held in Vienna at the end of 2009 had to be postponed to 2010.

Full information on the Centres' 2009 activities and their 2010 proposals will be available for the meeting of the Directors of Centres to be held in Paris on 1 to 3 February 2010 and will also be presented to the Permanent Correspondents at their next meeting in spring 2010.

The French delegate remarked that present prevention measures are challenged by climate change which is a topic of prime importance and which ties in with the prevention of natural risks. He informed that France has embarked upon an adjustment plan to take account of climate change and the rise in sea and river levels and the associated cost of this adjustment will be significant. International co-operation in setting up such plans will be crucial. The Executive Secretary supported this remark and agreed that it would be very useful if countries informed the Agreement of their preparation to this adjustment to foster international co-operation on the issue.

- Information on the audits carried out in 2009

The Chair of the Audit Commission, Mr. Jean-Mathias Goerens, surveyed the five audits (Ankara, Athens, Lisbon, Biskra and Rabat) completed in 2009 and emphasized that no major

problems had been found. The new procedure adopted last year on informing the Committee of Permanent Correspondents about audit reports had been implemented: the provisional report prepared by the auditors is sent to the concerned Centre for comments, comments which the auditors decide to incorporate or not in their final report submitted to the Committee for approval.

The 2009 audits allowed to highlight a number of drawbacks and possible improvements in the work of the Centres, already identified in previous years:

Structural and management issues

The international character of governing bodies should be promoted for those Centres which are almost exclusively managed at national level. As such an international aspect involves too much expense, appropriate subsidies should be allocated if the Agreement insists upon that aspect. Staff and premises are mainly covered by host countries so grants are used mostly for activities. Reports between financial exercises are not fully adequate. There is a need to make the presentation of accounts more uniform in order to facilitate comparison. It would be appropriate to give precise instructions to the Directors and financial managers of the Centres.

Scientific issues

A good convergence between the Medium Term Plan and its implementation by the audited Centres was to be noted. However, only two of them had participated in the coordinated programmes: it was recommended that Centres make a greater effort to cooperate with other Centres and institutions on truly international oriented projects. For better dissemination of their work, translating their high scientific quality work into at least one official language of the Council of Europe should also be supported.

Five audits (the Nicosia, Bruyères-le-Châtel, Valletta, Chisinau and Madrid Centres) will be carried out in 2010.

The audit report was approved by the Committee. In the name of all the Permanent Correspondents, the Chair thanked Mr. Goerens and the experts for the work carried out. The Secretariat will study in conjunction with the Audit Commission possible improvements.

5. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Draft recommendation on vulnerability of cultural heritage to climate change

The Executive Secretariat briefly presented the draft recommendation, reminding that its objective was to make governments conscious of the problem and to encourage them to take action. The Committee carefully examined the text of the draft Recommendation (document AP/CAT (2009) 20) and after its detailed discussion, several amendments were consequently adopted (see appendix 3 for the final version).

- Draft recommendation on national platforms

The Executive Secretariat briefly presented the draft recommendation, which is aimed to promote national platforms and encourage those countries which have not yet done so to set them up. The Committee carefully examined the text of the draft Recommendation (document AP/CAT (2009) 27) and the debate discussed the participation of local and regional authorities: the way to involve them is left open as it has to be adapted to the national context. After its detailed discussion, a few amendments were adopted (see appendix 4 for the final version).

6. PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR 2010

- *Draft budget for 2010*

The Secretariat presented the main issues for the 2010 budget, pointing out that the 2010 budget will not differ substantially from that of 2009. The amount devoted to activities will be slightly increased due to a continued efficiency saving drive over the last few years as well as the additional resources associated to the accession of Serbia to the Agreement. However, this change will not be fully effective until 2011 as the organisation of the Ministerial Session will imply that.

The Belgian representative asked about the choice of expected results presented in the budgetary document. The Secretariat explained that the document presented is a very synthetic presentation of the overall activity of the Agreement and decided to take the comment into account in next year's formulation.

The French representative questioned the use of the additional contributions from new countries. The Secretariat explained that, due to the small amount considered, the proposal to foster the amounts devoted to activities (unchanged since many years) seemed obvious. Of course, in case of a significant increase of resources, its possible allocation will be discussed in detail at the Committee of Permanent Correspondants.

The Luxembourg representative asked about the voluntary contribution line. The Secretariat explained that a budgetary line is needed to be able to receive potential contributions from even non member States.

Following the discussion, the budget for 2010 was adopted.

- *Guidelines for the 2010 programme of activities*

The Executive Secretariat briefly reviewed the main fields of activity for 2010, emphasizing the follow up of previous work and in particular the topics covered by the different working groups. In addition he highlighted new initiatives such as the climate change impact on risk management or the ethical issues in emergencies.

On the latter topic, the legal aspect will be prepared by an expert, Mr. Michel Prieur, who will draft a Charter on Resilience dealing with the ethical aspects of disaster risk reduction. This Charter will comprise two aspects: legal and operational. The more operational angle, related to protection of rights of disabled persons in a disaster, will also be studied by the ECFF Centre in Athens. The results of both actions will be presented for examination by the Committee of Permanent Correspondents at its meeting in April 2010.

The French delegate, Mr. Thierry Hubert, emphasized the need to promote work on vulnerability to respond to all solicitations from the different partners on this topic. He remarked that the Agreement could contribute positively to work on urban development in risk areas.

With regard to legislative aspects, he pointed out that the Agreement should mainly focus on the dissemination of best practices and on the adaptation of existing legislation rather than on promoting new legislation, which all too often leads to legal obstacles delaying their implementation. Along the same lines, he insisted that support should be concentrated on already existing initiatives instead of creating new ones.

The Executive Secretary stressed that the Agreement has no mandate to harmonize legislations between member States and that avoiding redundant work with respect to other initiatives is a crucial point in the Agreement's action.

The discussion on activities for 2010 led to debate on two recurrent major topics: the complementarity between Centres' activities and the diffusion of the result of their activities.

On the complementarity issue, the Belgian delegate proposed to foster co-operation within Centres around common topics. Armenian delegate suggested to continue to support work within a single Centre but with the view of future cooperation with other centres in a more international approach. The other French delegate, Mr. Feunteun, suggested to invite some Permanent Correspondents to the work of the Centres to improve the coordination between the two pillars of the Agreement.

The Executive Secretary insisted upon the need for increased relations between Permanent Correspondents and Centres. He suggested the possibility of the Bureau attending the meeting of Directors to ensure coordination, an idea supported by the Committee.

Regarding the dissemination of the work and achievements of the Agreement, the French delegate, Mr. Hubert, proposed that given the wealth of material, it would be useful to devise a summary listing of work carried out and devise an annual bulletin which should be translated into the two official languages of the Council of Europe and possibly more. The Ukrainian delegate proposed to prepare very short summaries of activities which will be published annually and give access to part of EUR-OPA website to diffuse the reports.

The Executive Secretary agreed that greater visibility is desirable for the Agreement's activities and confirmed that every effort will be made by the Executive Secretariat to establish an efficient communication strategy. The Chair summarized on the need for increased communication within components of the Agreement and with outside partners.

- *Proposals from the Specialised Centres*

In view of the preparation of a new Medium Term Plan 2011-2015, the Executive Secretariat explained that it had been suggested to have an additional day added to the meeting of the Directors of Specialised Centres to allow time for the examination of their longer term strategies. The Committee of Permanent Correspondents at its meeting in April would then be able to work on the new Medium Term Plan taking into consideration the Centres' suggestions.

The Executive Secretariat pointed out that this year the Centres had been requested to submit their proposals before the end of September to have a better overview of their wishes and capacities for 2010 activities and to improve the coordination with the main lines of action of the Agreement. There was again a mixed response to this early call: some Centres had still not replied.

This delay in response makes it quite difficult to accurately define the Programme of Activities for 2010 but the Secretariat presented the proposals already received for 2010 activities within the coordinated programmes classified according to the various sectors of activity:

- School education: manual and special tests on safety of schools (Yerevan Centre); extension of the BE-SAFE-NET project to additional hazards (various centres); educational games for disaster protection (Sofia Centre).
- University education: ECGS workshop (Luxembourg Centre).
- Professional education: training course on radiological monitoring in the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone (Kiev Centre); regional training course on forest fires (Fribourg Centre); creation of a Civil Defence and Protection School (San Marino Centre).
- Vulnerability: enhancing capacities and regional cooperation in fire management (Freiburg Centre); multi hazard assessment of coastline risks (Strasbourg centre); Black Sea area flood and landslides problems (Ankara Centre).
- Early warning: real time alert system (Paris Centre); real time monitoring system of large dams (Tbilisi Centre).
- Legislation/management: development of Communities Network for Nuclear Safety (Kiev Centre).
- Prevention/information: campaigns on informing and warning the populations about emergencies (Yerevan Centre); Danube a river for, a care for everybody (Sofia Centre).
- Cultural heritage: summer school on seismic Risk Assessment in areas with monumental structures (Athens Centre); convergent Approach for Seismic Analysis of the Aggregates of Historical Buildings (Lisbon Centre).
- Climate change : management and protection of cultural heritage facing climate change (Ravello Centre); predictions of South Caucasus regional effects (Tbilisi Centre)
- Post disaster actions: estimation of possible consequences of earthquakes with “EXTREMUM” (Moscow Centre).

Due to the fact that not all proposals were available at this stage of time, the programme of activities for 2010 was designed to ensure that domains funded are those in line with the Medium Term Plan: the choice of associated projects proposed by the Centres will be decided accordingly at a later date. Participants adopted the proposed programme of activities for 2010.

The Chair opened the floor to comments on the Centres’ activities.

The Russian delegate, Mr. Vladimir Kakusha, asked why there was no line in the budget devoted to the dissemination of the results of the studies and activities of the Centres. The Executive Secretariat explained that all attempts are made to promote publishing on the web site which is regularly updated. However the problem of the language of production of the various material persists and translation costs are high: the Secretariat reiterated that the Centres should devote part of their grant for translation purposes (even though this may imply a slight reduction in activity), to enable their material to be produced also in either English or French for larger diffusion.

The Belgian delegate suggested the preparation of an inventory on existing material to have a clearer picture of what is available and to help find a synergy and build a common framework. She also proposed that small workshops of Centres working on common themes will improve coordination and more efficient feedback between the Centres. This would contribute to provide concrete proposals for Permanent Correspondents and the Ministerial Session. The Executive Secretariat recalled that this is actually the main goal of the Working Groups already set up.

The Armenian delegate agreed that Centres should find the resources for translating their material into English or French and fully supported the Belgian delegate’s proposal for greater coordination between Centres.

- *Preparation of the 2010 Ministerial Session*

The Executive Secretary informed of the results of his preliminary meeting with the Russian authorities on the preparation of the forthcoming Ministerial Session to be held at the end of September or first week of October 2010 in Saint Petersburg. The draft agenda is still very preliminary and Permanent Correspondents were invited to contact their Ministries to identify possible topics of their interventions within the preliminary sessions identified.

The Armenian delegate already informed on the wish of his Minister to participate in session 2 on cross-border co-operation and his offer to co-chair a session. The French delegate remarked that the balance between representations on preparation/response and prevention/vulnerability needed to be respected because a less vulnerable society will allow for a better response. He added that in the case of France, both the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Ecology should be contacted regarding interventions at the Session

- *Discussion on the topics of the Ministerial Session and the Medium Term Plan 2011-2015*

The French delegate enquired about the structure of each session, whether there would be a series of statements or a panel discussion. The Executive Secretary explained that a discussion and short interventions section is planned. The French delegate remarked upon the importance of emphasising the role of science in disaster prevention and response and suggested inviting an eminent scientist or a leading researcher. The Executive Secretary agreed to the possibility of inviting a key-note speaker on the scientific approach.

The Ukrainian delegate pointed out that co-chairs should be Ministers and that the achievements of the Agreement since the last Ministerial Session should be presented in the form of a small booklet to the Ministers. The Belgian delegate agreed and confirmed the necessity for visibility to encourage the support of their respective Ministers. The Executive Secretary confirmed that this booklet is foreseen and will be presented by his Director General, Mrs. Battaini-Dragoni.

The Belgian delegate remarked the need to emphasize the response aspect alongside the prevention aspect: the Executive Secretary confirmed that the Session intends to cover response and the word “response” will definitely be added to its title. The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia delegate, Mr. Mihail Garevski, remarked that it would also be judicious to add the term “*adaptation*” to climate change in the title of the 12th Ministerial session.

Regarding the title of the Session, the Russian delegate agreed that an appropriate name should be agreed upon but he considered that it was more important to emphasize the mention “12th Ministerial Session of the European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement (EUR-OPA)” with respect to the theme.

The Chair insisted that certain key words in the agenda will be more attractive for the Ministers and requested that the content of the interventions be communicated to the Executive Secretary to try to coordinate them in order to have interesting sessions. The Executive Secretary pointed out the necessary political content of the Ministerial Session and that too technical formulations should be avoided.

In order to attract Ministers to the event, the Belgian delegate proposed that a VIP programme be scheduled, that speakers address both intervention and response and that focus be made on the

various phases of the risk cycle to be presented at the opening session. The Executive Secretary agreed to the presentation of all the risk cycle phases during the Ministerial Session.

The Chair opened the floor to the Russian delegate, Mr. Vladimir Kakusha, who assured the meeting that EMERCOM of Russia will do everything possible to ensure the success of this event. He explained that its regional centre being in Saint Petersburg, they will thus be in a position to demonstrate their different fields of activity to the Ministers. He requested the Permanent Correspondents to send in the names and spheres of interest of their Ministers as early as possible to enable a VIP programme to be devised. He added that Minister Sergey Shoigu will open the Session and will then be available for discussions on a bi-lateral basis with other Ministers.

7. ELECTION OF THE CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIRS OF THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT CORRESPONDENTS

Mr. Ruslan Tsalikov (Russian Federation) was elected Chair and Mr. Damir Trut (Croatia) and Mr. Thierry hubert (France) were elected Vice Chairs.

The former Chair, Mr. Iuliu Bara (Romania) declared that it had been an honour to Chair the Agreement. The Committee thanked Mr. Bara for the work done, for his encouragement and for his enthusiasm in promoting the Agreement.

8. DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held in Paris (France) on 8-9 April 2010 (date to be confirmed).

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Turkish delegate, Ms. Nehir Varol, informed of the recent changes in the Disaster Affairs Management structure in Turkey and reported briefly on the recent floods having affected Istanbul and the North East part of the country, highlighting the lessons learned. She also announced the Antalya international workshop on risk education at the end of November.

The San Marino delegate, Mr. Giuseppe Dermo, informed of the seminar on “International mass casualties, experiences from Abruzzo to Kamtchatka” to be held on 23 November in San Marino and invited all interested Permanent Correspondents to attend this event.

The delegate from the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Mr. Mihail Garevski, informed of the 14th European Earthquake Engineering Conference to be organised in Ohrid in 2010 for which 1200 abstracts had already been collected. He welcomed all Permanent Correspondents to attend and additional information will be posted on the EUR-OPA web site.

The Executive Secretariat acknowledged all the information provided and encouraged Permanent Correspondents to regularly send in such information for publication on the EUR-OPA web site.

In the name of all the Permanent Correspondents and the Executive Secretariat, the Chair reiterated his thanks to the Croatian authorities and particularly to the Croatian delegate, Mr. Damir Trut and his team, for having organised such a good meeting with truly warm hospitality.

APPENDIX 1**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS / LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS*****MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THE AGREEMENT / PAYS MEMBRES DE L'ACCORD*****ARMENIA / ARMENIE**

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APPENDIX 2

DRAFT AGENDA

1. **WELCOME BY THE CROATIAN AUTHORITIES AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**
AP/CAT(2009)OJ 8 rev: Draft Agenda
2. **RECALL OF THE LAST MEETING OF THE PERMANENT CORRESPONDENTS**
AP/CAT(2009)17: Conclusions of the Meeting of the Permanent Correspondents, Paris, 6-7 April 2009
3. **COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIR, DELEGATIONS AND EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**
 - Civil Protection structure and policy of Serbia
4. **INVOLVEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES**
 - Participation in the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (Geneva, 16-19 June 2009)
AP/CAT(2009)15: Contribution of the Major Hazards Agreement to the Hyogo Framework of Action
 - Development of the network of European national platforms for disaster risk reduction
AP/CAT(2009)11: Minutes of the meeting of the National Platforms for disaster risk reduction
 - Role and activities of the Arab Bureau of Civil Protection and Rescue
 - Cooperation with the Group of European Municipalities with Nuclear Facilities
5. **PROGRESS OF 2009 ACTIVITIES**
 - European and Mediterranean Workshop on Climate change impact on water-related and marine risks (Murcia, Spain, 26-27 October 2009)
AP/CAT(2009)07: Announcement and Programme
 - Activities of the Working Groups
 - on awareness and education to risk at school level
 - on the role of local and regional authorities in major hazard management
 - on cultural heritage and risk
 - Activities of the Centres
 - Quick overview
 - Information on the audits carried out in 2009
6. **DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS**
 - Draft recommendation on cultural heritage and climate change
AP/CAT(2009)20
 - Draft recommendation on national platforms
AP/CAT(2009)27
7. **PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR 2010**
 - Draft budget for 2010
AP/CAT(2009)21
 - Guidelines for the 2010 programme of activities
AP/CAT(2009)22
 - Proposals from the Specialised Centres
AP/CAT(2009)53
 - Draft agenda of the Ministerial Session
AP/CAT(2009)OJ9
8. **ELECTION OF THE CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIRS OF THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT CORRESPONDENTS**
9. **DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT MEETING**
10. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

APPENDIX 3**Recommendation 2009 - 1 of the Committee of Permanent Correspondents, adopted at its 57th meeting in Dubrovnik, Croatia (15-16 October 2009), on Vulnerability of Cultural Heritage to Climate Change**

The Committee of Permanent Correspondents of the European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement (EUR-OPA),

Noting that extreme weather events are expected to increase in frequency and intensity in the next decades as a result of climate change;

Recognising that climate change is an important threat to cultural heritage, likely to increase in the coming years;

Conscious that the foreseen changes in temperature and rainfall in Europe and the whole Mediterranean Region will affect the conservation of the cultural heritage, and that rising temperatures, increased or decreased humidity and the frequency of floods, forest fires, coastal erosion, landslides, heat waves, droughts, sea level rise and change in groundwater patterns will have consequences on the stability of historical buildings, integrity of archaeological sites and conservation of materials and collections that may result if their further deterioration or ageing;

Conscious that the deterioration and, in some cases, loss, of cultural heritage would have negative consequences for European and Mediterranean societies, in particular because of its value as a source of identity and livelihood;

Noting that the preservation of existing heritage structures and traditional building materials and methods have advantages in terms of carbon footprint over building new structures and producing new materials;

Mindful of the global dimension of this problem and of the responsibilities of European and Mediterranean states at the world scale, as signatories of numerous international treaties, agreements and strategies within the United Nations system and the Council of Europe;

Recognising that landscapes form part of cultural heritage, but conscious that the effect of climate change on landscapes requires a more specific approach, given the relevance of their biological, environmental and agricultural components;

Recommend Member States to:

1. assess the risk to cultural heritage from climate change, including sites, building and objects that may be affected both by climate-related events and/or by gradual change in environmental conditions;
2. identify those cultural assets at higher risk and evaluate necessary preventive and adaptation measures;

3. promote the adoption of emergency planning for those sites most vulnerable to events such as floods, landslides, coastal erosion and extreme weather-related events;
4. assess the potential impact of mitigation measures, such as renovation of buildings for improved heating efficiency, on cultural heritage;
5. promote at the national level inter-agency cooperation on climate change and cultural heritage, integrating heritage concerns into disaster risk-reduction policies;
6. encourage international cooperation on vulnerability of cultural heritage to climate change, favouring research, action and synergies among international organisations in this field and promoting exchanges of knowledge and experiences within member states and also with other non-member states;
7. integrate as appropriate cultural heritage into the adaptation policies to be promoted at international climate change negotiations;
8. promote training among heritage professionals aimed to recognise and deal with climate change impacts of cultural heritage;
9. foster the inclusion of the appropriate courses within education institutions on the science and management of cultural heritage in a context of climate change;
10. promote and support research on the effects of climate change on cultural heritage, including adaptation and prediction strategies, in particular on :
 - a. vulnerability of materials to climate change;
 - b. development of tools to monitor and manage change;
 - c. effects of lowering water tables and coastal erosion on archaeological sites and built heritage;
 - d. increase in bio-deterioration risk for cultural assets;
 - e. economic evaluation of heritage loss and degradation as a result of climate change
11. encourage local and regional authorities and people with responsibility on managing cultural heritage to be aware of the risks to sites, buildings and objects from a changing climate.

APPENDIX 4**Recommendation 2009 - 2 of the Committee of Permanent Correspondents, adopted at its 57th meeting in Dubrovnik, Croatia (15-16 October 2009), on the promotion and strengthening of national platforms for disaster risk reduction**

The Committee of Permanent Correspondents of the European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement (EUR-OPA),

Taking into account the Hyogo Framework for Action which sets among its 2005-2015 priorities for action support for the creation and strengthening of national platforms for disaster risk reduction and recalling that the priorities for action adopted in 2006 at the Marrakech Ministerial Session of the European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement also include the promotion of national platforms for disaster risk reduction;

Aware that national platforms on disaster risk reduction as multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral for a are effective mechanisms to facilitate and support coordination across sectors and disciplines, to promote exchange of information and dialogue at national, regional and local level and to inter-link science and the operational sector in order to raise awareness for risk reduction;

Aware also that only a few of the 26 member States of the EUR-OPA Agreement have so far set up national platforms and wishing to promote and support new platforms, including those already planned;

Noting with interest the ISDR document “Guidelines for National Platforms for Disaster Risk Reduction” which provides guidance to establish or strengthen national platforms for disaster risk reduction and describes the objectives, advantages, principles and major functions of national platforms for disaster risk reduction;

Recommend member States of the EUR-OPA Agreement to:

1. consider the creation of a national platform on disaster risk reduction and, where appropriate, the strengthening of existing national platforms;
2. give formal recognition to the national platforms for disaster risk reduction, ensuring their role in promoting dialogue among the different institutional and private actors involved in disaster risk reduction;
3. involve local and regional authorities in national platforms as well as the relevant administrations, technical and scientific institutions, rescuers and appropriate non governmental organisations, civil society bodies and the private sector;
4. ensure, as appropriate, that the national platform for disaster risk reduction is supported by a body or an institution able to liaise all relevant national partners, promote improvement of disaster risk reduction policies, planning and practice;

5. use the potential of national platforms for disaster risk reduction to promote a better information of the public and decision makers on risk, promoting the improvement in society of a culture of risk;
6. provide as appropriate sufficient means for national platforms on disaster risk reduction, at the same time making more judicious use of existing resources to permit them to efficiently carry out their coordination and networking activities;
7. use national platforms as fora to promote new ideas on disaster risk reduction and to analyse the challenges, shortcomings or values of existing disaster risk reduction policies, including the lessons learnt from recent disasters or emergency situations;
8. associate national platforms in the implementation of risk prevention and adaptation policies in the field of spatial planning, city planning and building;
9. communicate to the Secretariat of the EUR-OPA Major Hazards Agreement and to the UN/ISDR Secretariat, plans to establish national platforms for disaster risk reduction so that both Secretariats may provide guidance, support, training and expertise as required;
10. communicate the creation of national platforms to both the Secretariat of the EUR-OPA Major Hazards Agreement and to the UN/ISDR Secretariat;
11. promote the participation of national platforms for disaster risk reduction into regional coordination initiatives so experiences from national platforms for disaster risk reduction may be shared with other European and Mediterranean States.