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

**MEETING OF THE DIRECTORS OF SPECIALISED CENTRES**

**4-5 December 2012**

**Council of Europe Office, PARIS (FRANCE)**

**CONCLUSIONS**

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## **1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

The Chair of the meeting, Mr Azelarab EL MOURAOUAH, welcomed the participants (cf. list in appendix 2) and, after the adoption of the agenda as set out in Appendix 1, he gave the floor to the Executive Secretary, Mr Fernandez-Galiano.

## **2. IMPLICATIONS OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS ON 2013 ACTIVITIES**

The Executive Secretary explained why the Secretariat had decided to hold the present meeting of directors of centres, initially planned in February 2013, in December 2012.

In 2013 the Agreement will have to deal with the consequences of the withdrawal of France as a member State: the 2013 budget will be reduced by 25% and the initially adopted projects for 2013 have to be adjusted accordingly. Its budgetary implications were exposed to the member States at the meeting of Permanent Correspondents in Dubrovnik, where they confirmed their strong support for the work developed by the Agreement. The necessity for cuts, in particular concerning activities, was discussed and the Secretariat was requested to propose adequate adjustments in the 2013 initial budget.

The Secretariat already proposed to reduce the meetings of Permanent Correspondents to only one per year and to cut one staff position. The previous support to the Early Warning System run by the EMSC has also been cancelled. Concerning the audits, it was decided to reserve it for only very precise needs identified and consequently it will no longer be systematic. The Secretariat pointed out that all the above proposals were designed in order to preserve as much as possible the main strength of Agreement, namely the programmes developed by the specialized Centres.

The Chair opened the floor for a general discussion on the information provided by the Executive Secretary.

As Chair of the Programme committee, Mr Vigneaux thanked the Secretariat for the effort to preserve as much as possible the work of the Centres and suggested to use such a crisis to improve that work. He proposed to highlight the cooperation between Centres and to better publicize the achievements of the Agreement through clearer information on the respective participation of each Centre in the projects and through specific publications related to the projects developed.

Mr Badalyan recalled that the website could be used more intensively to publicize the results. The Secretariat agreed on that but explained that visibility must be reviewed using the deliverables and executive summaries to be provided by the Centres in the newly adopted project approach. Mr Poyarkov also proposed to focus on visible results which can be reusable elsewhere and to increase cooperation with other international organizations.

Mr Micallef proposed to capitalize on what other partners do by organizing joint biannual conferences devoted each time to a specific risk. Both Ms Pautrizel and Mr Milutinovic supported

the idea as a way to achieve better external visibility. Mr Milutinovic suggested the organization of a specific session devoted to present the Agreement's work at more general conferences.

Mr Ferrigni also regretted that activities are too often strictly national and insisted on the thematic contribution of each Centre at the global level. Mr Milutinovic pointed out that new partnerships should be sought, for example with NATO, going beyond our circle to make ourselves better known. Mr Goerens, Chair of the Audit commission, finally remarked that we must also address the competent authorities (even if outside our national counterparts), for example by sending summaries of our work directly to them.

### **3. BRIEF PRESENTATION OF 2012 ACHIEVEMENTS**

The Executive Secretariat recalled that each project must have a short executive summary with simple guidelines addressed to decision makers. This remark highlighted the need to adapt the way of addressing different publics. Besides the scientific work of the Centres, Mr Goerens likewise recalled that Permanent Correspondents asked for concrete results. Mr Micallef also supported the need to summarize results in order for a wider public to understand them, thus having an increased impact.

The floor was given to the coordinators of the various projects supported in 2012-13 to briefly present the state of advancement of their respective projects and suggest possible evolutions for 2013 activities. As a foreword, Mr Anguita, informed that due to Mr Garcia's recent retirement, the Centre in Madrid is in the process of reorienting its activities and looks forward to increased collaboration in the existing projects.

#### **Multi-sensor technologies for EWS of landslides and man-made structure**

Mr Chelidze exposed the main aspects of the project which focus on the use of fibre optic cable to convey the information collected by various types of sensors. He pointed out in particular the lack of accuracy of various GPS systems currently used and he proposed a more cost effective acoustic monitoring.

Mr Micallef pointed out that such a high level study must take care of its practical implications. In order to foster the implementation of the proposals by the decision-makers, he suggested preparing a poster per project instead of making a too detailed presentation mainly addressed to specialists in the field. The Executive Secretariat remarked that such requirement will be necessary in the final two-year reports.

#### **Surviving disasters: a pocket guide for citizens**

Mr Barelli presented the English paper version of the booklet where no technical terms are used and the emergency numbers in different countries can be provided. He informed that the translation in various languages by other Centres is either done or will be done in 2014. The question of the dissemination of the produced material was raised: it can be a printed document, a downloadable document or even a dedicated website available in various languages and evolving with new topics and/or languages. Mr Georgescu proposed to consider an electronic

version for smartphones including information on foreign countries for tourists and Mr Barelli confirmed that it is under consideration.

Mr Micallef pointed out the interest of such work and Mr Poyarkov recalled that providing information to the population is one of the main goals of the Agreement, even if he remarked the need to take into account the national specificities (such as the legislation) of each country, an issue which necessitates the consultation of national authorities as also pointed out by Mr Oqajov. The Executive Secretary recalled that foreigners can be included among most vulnerable people due to the ignorance of local risks and the language barrier.

### **Proposal of a Regional Agreement on Fire Management Transboundary Cooperation**

Mr Mitsopoulos sketched the steps taken in 2012 towards drafting a document in that domain. A multilingual glossary on fires is also in preparation and a common meeting with UNECE is planned in Geneva in November 2013 to promote such regional agreement. The Executive Secretary informed that the forthcoming Agreement on Forests in Europe under negotiation can include protocols, and one of them could be devoted to forest fires: He suggested that the concerned partners ask to participate as observer to that larger process in order to promote such specific protocol on forest fires.

Mr Multinovic requested that the national stakeholders be involved in such an initiative, in particular the Crisis Management Services, and proposed to collaborate in the project. He also recalled that other international initiatives (such as DPPI) are already active in that domain. Along this line, Mr Poyarkov raised the problem of cooperation of existing Centres and authorities of the Agreement in various fields.

### **Guidelines for the defence of rural populations, settlements and other assets against wildfires and smoke pollution**

Mr Mitsopoulos informed that half of the work on producing the guidelines has been done. As the development of the Guidelines is a 2-year project, the first year has been devoted to the field work and other preparatory work. A workshop was held in Skopje to evaluate the preparatory work and to draft the concept of the Guidelines.

Mr Multinovic asked why the Athens Centre cannot deal with the whole South East Europe countries instead of associating other partners outside the actual network of Centres. The Executive Secretary insisted that the goal for each project is to have on board the right people but recognised the complexity of a direct financing of other partners outside the network of specialized centres.

### **Real-time telemetric monitoring/early warning systems of large engineering constructions with time series linear/nonlinear dynamics processing toolbox**

Mr Chelidze presented the methodology proposed to monitor the dams and its concrete application to the Inguri Dam in Georgia. He emphasized that the main problem is the possibility of other countries to contribute to the project. Mr El Mouraouah has consulted the Moroccan authorities to do the work on a nearby dam and Mr Milutinovic inquired firstly about the existing legislation on that topic in "the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" but as no such legislation exists, he can propose to adopt such an approach.

## **Pan-European and Nation-wide landslide susceptibility assessment**

Mr Malet informed that a meeting organized in October 2012 in Berlin discussed national landslide susceptibility assessments, different methods for evaluating the performance of the assessments and access to data. A subdivision of the European territory into seven different zones was attempted and landslide susceptibility modelling was performed and validated with the inventory data. The work was complemented with national assessments for two countries: Romania and Georgia.

## **Seismic protection of monuments**

Ms Pelli presented the first steps towards a regulatory document for the design of structural interventions in monuments in earthquake prone areas. She remarked that the Ravello centre has contributed to the project with a specific study on vernacular habitat. Based on both Greek and Italian experiences, Mr Badalyan suggested using them to harmonize related Armenian legislation in that domain with existing European practices in the field. **Assessment of Interventions in Earthquake Prone Areas**

Ms Pelli informed on the advancement of the Harmonized Intervention Code, a complementary document on part 3 of the Eurocode 8. She explained that the workshop planned for 2012 will be delayed to early 2013 in order to finalize the Code before exchanging experiences and opinions among the three Centres and identifying case studies and proposals for further improvement of the Code.

## **Coupling terrestrial and marine datasets for coastal hazard assessment and risk reduction in changing environments**

As stressed by Mr Malet, the project is quite innovative as it includes geomorphology of the underwater in the analysis of coastal landslides. The work done in 2012 has focused on the collection of necessary data in two pilot areas (Normandy and Malta) while next year's work will focus on more general implications of such work.

Ms Pautrizel expressed her interest in the project and enquired about the possible biodiversity issues raised by the collected data. Mr Malet acknowledged that such issues have not yet been considered in the project as it focuses mainly on the data pertinent to study potential landslides.

## **New global climate changes as a result of increased development of the Arctic territory**

Ms Naumova presented the challenges for risk management associated to the climate changes in that specific region. She emphasized the new vulnerability of people living in such regions and informed that the workshop organised in Norylsk adopted some important recommendations on that topic.

Mr Micallef remarked how the global impact of such Arctic climate change can affect other member countries, highlighting the general interest of the project developed by the Moscow Centre. Mr Vigneaux also pointed out the importance of permafrost changes on analysing existing risks in other European countries.

## **Climate change and cultural heritage**

Mr Ferrigni reported on the training course held in Paris in cooperation with the Louvre Museum. Addressed to young researchers, the session was in particular devoted to urban pressure, energy constraints and effect of tourism. He also recalled the other activities related to cultural heritage and risks developed by the Ravello Centre itself.

### **Analysis of local authorities involvement in major hazards management**

Mr De Budt informed that the project on the role of local and regional authorities in DRR has been suspended in 2012 due to the lack of available human resources to develop it. In order to continue the project in 2013, contacts with additional countries will be reactivated and a workshop on best practices and cross boundary issues is planned.

### **Nuclear hazard: Chernobyl and Fukushima lessons for public awareness**

Mr Poyarkov recalled that the booklet was first drafted in 2011 and technically checked by IAEA representatives. In 2012, it was translated into each contributing country's own language and circulated to collect comments from all concerned stakeholders - and not only to specialists - a very useful step to improve it. Based on that revised material, he suggested organising training courses with the support of other international organizations (such as UNESCO and IAEA).

Mr Ocaqov pointed out that it was interesting as it accurately summarises the information but raised the problem of the needs in terms of publication. Mr Badalyan raised the problem of various kinds of public being addressed by the same document and proposed to associate existing documents (such as the ones developed in Armenia) to the booklet. Mr Bantus proposed to work on other brochures addressed to various components of the population.

Mr De Budt remarked that awareness is not yet in the school curricula and proposed to organize a round table with people in charge of communication to advice on the adequate diffusion of such material. Mr Poyarkov recalled that next year will not necessarily be the last one for the projects and possible recommendations have to be approved by national authorities and consequently should remain at quite a general level.

### **Coastal areas management against seismic and tsunami risks: socio-economic impact**

Ms Teves informed that a first meeting with the support of the Cascais Municipality was organised in June with 20 participants to discuss the methodology to adopt, emphasizing the social vulnerability and resilience. The follow up of the work has already been done in both countries: the studies concerning Lagos and Cascais are completed and the Moroccan study zones (Tanger and Medir) are already identified and the involvement of several Ministries in the project has been granted.

Consequently the work in 2013 will focus mainly on the awareness of the population and local authorities and a second seminar in Tanger is scheduled. Mr El Mouraouah pointed out the possible interest of other Centres to participate in the project and Mr Micallef wished to receive all pertinent information as a basis for a future common work on tsunamis. Mr Vigneaux also proposed to enlarge its extent and suggested the cooperation of Bordeaux University.

### **Earthquake preparedness of school students and population using scientific knowledge for public multimedia information**

Mr Georgescu explained that the project is focused on Vrancea type earthquakes and a first step is to better know their implications for the population by recovering information on previous events in the affected countries. He also emphasized that community participation in the previous information is necessary to limit its impact, as we cannot wait for authorities to do all the work. He insisted upon the specificity of the region and its constructions. . He announced that the 2013 work will prepare recommendations for various types of buildings.

Mr Kolev remarked that such earthquakes are quite regular so it will probably happen in the near future. Adequate awareness of the population is required through common knowledge for various potentially affected countries. Mr Georgescu proposed to use Internet as a privileged mean to reach users such as the students. Mr Ferrigni pointed out the need to deal with consequences on various local buildings and the response to such diverse buildings to the same event is very interesting. Mr Milutinovic recalled that Skopje, if not affected physically, has suffered an important psychological effect associated to Vrancea earthquakes: the project may include different geographical areas indirectly affected.

### **Information-educational materials on awareness and preparedness to earthquake**

After emphasizing the specificities of the population, Mr Badalyan presented the specific material produced for them as well as adapted plans for specialized institutions hosting them, based on the involvement of the stakeholders in such specialized institutions to define adequate actions. He finally pointed out the importance of regular permanent campaigns and ways to help authorities.

Ms Pelli recalled that a questionnaire on disabled people is available on the Athens Centre website and Mr Ocaqov informed that the Baku Centre has submitted some work on psychological help that could be useful for the work in that area.

## **4. PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION OF 2014-15 ACTIVITIES**

The Executive Secretary explained that the development of the future programme of activities for 2014-15 has to adjust to new financial constraints but also has to take into account both the expectations of the Permanent Correspondents and the capabilities of the Centres. In order to give an additional opportunity to the Directors of Centres to contribute to such a debate on future activities, all proposals addressed to the Executive Secretary will be welcomed. Nevertheless the informal discussion held during the meeting already identified some interesting ideas.

The clustering of various meetings to reduce their associated costs was suggested and the Executive Secretary informed that the Bureau has already considered that possibility: the Executive Secretariat will consider its feasibility on a case by case basis. Another suggestion was to launch peer reviews but such a procedure requires clear-cut criteria to be really useful.

Concerning the topics to be promoted, Mr Micallef recalled that sea-level rise is an increasing problem: its consequences will be important as it can affect beaches and tourism. Floods are also an increasing problem even in countries that used to be less affected by them (for example, the

United Kingdom). Mr Vigneaux remarked that the impact of fluxes towards basins is also another important issue to consider. Along this line of climate related risks, Mr Barelli also pointed out that hurricanes are now appearing in Europe and he also suggested improving the behavioural skills of rescuers and victims for all kind of risks.

Mr Ferrigni pointed out that scientific knowledge is to a great extent lacking in decision making and suggested to foster that diffusion towards non-scientists, for example through conferences for media representatives. Mr Malet emphasized the importance for planning of multi-risk approaches as possible domino effects between risks are more likely.

Mr Badalyan raised as potential future domains of activity, the issues related to mountain areas as well as transboundary cooperation. Another potential domain of work is the focus on other vulnerable groups (apart from disabled people) such as tourists or refugees. Finally, Mr Milutinovic proposed a systematic survey of hazards within the Agreement's member countries to produce a European hazard atlas as well as the study of the IT integration of data (for example on critical infrastructures).

The Executive Secretary remarked nevertheless that the Agreement must not focus too much on recovery issues as other international organization deal with that more efficiently.

Mr Kolev proposed to study the control of small and medium dams but the Executive Secretary remarked that it is more linked to environmental measures than to DRR ones.

## **5. ELECTION OF THE CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR OF THE MEETING OF DIRECTORS OF CENTRES**

Mr El Mouraouah and Mr Poyarkov were re-elected respectively as Chair and Co-Chair of the Meeting of Directors of Centres.

## **6. DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF DIRECTORS OF CENTRES**

The next Meeting of Directors of Centres will take place at the same period of the year (November or December), most probably in the Council of Europe's office in Paris.

**MEETING OF THE DIRECTORS OF SPECIALISED EURO-MEDITERRANEAN CENTRES  
OF THE EUR-OPA MAJOR HAZARDS AGREEMENT**

**Tuesday 4th December (9.30 a.m.) to Wednesday 5th December 2012 (5.00 p.m.)**

*Council of Europe Office, 55 avenue Kléber, PARIS 16e - Room 1*

*Tel. +33 1 44 05 33 60*

**AGENDA**

1. Adoption of the draft agenda *AP/CAT (2012)0J 6*
2. Activities developed in 2012 *AP/CAT(2012)8*
  - Information on the recent developments
  - Presentation by the coordinators of their projects by line of action
    - Using information to save lives and help victims
    - Using knowledge to reduce vulnerability
    - Placing people at the heart of disaster risk reduction
3. Adjustment of the activities planned in 2013 *AP/CAT(2012)8*
  - Implications of the new budgetary context
  - Discussions by line of action:
    - Using information to save lives and help victims
    - Using knowledge to reduce vulnerability
    - Placing people at the heart of disaster risk reduction
4. Preliminary discussions on the workplan for 2014-15
  - Identification of major topics for the future
  - Proposals of associated actions
5. Other business
6. Election of the chair and vice-chair of the Meeting of the Directors of Centres
7. Date and place of the next meeting

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS / LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS**

***Armenia / Arménie***

***ECRM*** - *European Interregional Scientific and Education Centre on major risks management/ (Yerevan, Armenia) / Centre européen interrégional et de formation sur la gestion des risques (Erevan, Arménie)*

Stepan BADALYAN, Director

23, Nalbandyan str, 0001 YEREVAN, Republic of ARMENIA.

Tel./Fax +374 10 54.49.92 - mobile : +374 91 23 00 37 - [ecrmeurope@gmail.com](mailto:ecrmeurope@gmail.com);

***Azerbaijan / Azerbaïdjan***

***ECMHT*** - *European Training Information Centre (Baku, Azerbaijan) / Centre Européen de Formation et d'Information, Baku, Azerbaïdjan*

Habib OJAQOV, Director

Ayna Sultanova Str. 5, Baku, Azerbaijan

Tel. +994 12 439 07 75- mob +99 450 310 70 20

Fax : +99412 510 33 88 ; [hocaqov@gmail.com](mailto:hocaqov@gmail.com); [ocaqov@bakinter.net](mailto:ocaqov@bakinter.net) - <http://www.foyyal.org>

***Belgium / Belgique***

***ISPU*** - *Higher Institute of Emergency Planning (Florival, Belgium) / Institut Supérieur de Planification d'Urgence, Florival, Belgique*

Koen De BUDT, Attaché,

Centre gouvernemental de Coordination et de Crise,

Service public fédéral Intérieur SPF, Rue Ducale 53 B-1000 Bruxelles

T +32 2 506 48 58 - F + 32 2 506 47 09 [koen.debudt@ibz.fgov.be](mailto:koen.debudt@ibz.fgov.be)

***Bulgaria / Bulgarie***

***E.C.R.P.*** - *European Centre for Risk Prevention (Sofia, Bulgaria) / Centre européen pour la Prévention des Risques (Sofia, Bulgarie)*

Kolio P. KOLEV, Director

4 Vitosha Blvd, P.O. Box 862 BG- 1000 SOFIA.

Tel/Fax. +359.988.35.54 - mobile +359 888929704 - [kolio.kolev@cslt.org](mailto:kolio.kolev@cslt.org);

***Cyprus / Chypre***

***"BE SAFE NET"*** - *European Centre for Disaster Awareness with the Use of Internet (Nicosia, Cyprus)*

Georgios GEROSIMOU

Cyprus Civil Defence, Elepheriou Venizelou 91 Paphos, Cyprus 8021

Tel: +357 26 818 470 +357 99665678 Fax: +357 26 94 63 74 - [gerosimou@post.com](mailto:gerosimou@post.com)

***France***

***CERG*** - *European Centre for Seismic and Geomorphological Hazards (Strasbourg, France)/ Centre Européen sur les Risques sismiques et géomorphologiques (Strasbourg, France)*

Jean-Philippe MALET, Chercheur CNRS Directeur CERG, Institut de Physique du Globe de Strasbourg 5 rue Descartes, 67084 Strasbourg Cedex.

Tél. +33 (0) 368 85 00 36 - +33 (0)6 75 00 68 41

[jeanphilippe.malet@unistra.fr](mailto:jeanphilippe.malet@unistra.fr); [cerg@unistra.fr](mailto:cerg@unistra.fr) - <http://cerg.u-strasbg.fr>

***CerCO*** - *Centre européen sur les Risques Côtiers / European Centre on Coastal Risks*

Françoise PAUTRIZEL, Directrice générale

Musée de la Mer, Plateau de l'Atalaye, 64200 Biarritz Tel : 05 59 22 33 34, Fax : 05 59 22 75  
30 ;direction@biarritzocean.com ;direction@museedelamer.com;  
centredelamer@museedelamer.com

### **Georgia / Georgie**

**GHHD** - *European Centre on Geodynamical Risks of High Dams (Tbilisi, Georgia) / Centre Européen sur les Risques Géodynamiques liés aux Grands Barrages (Tbilisi, Géorgie)*

Tamaz CHELIDZE, Director, European Centre on Geodynamical Risks of High Dams, Institute of Geophysics, M.Nodia Institute of Geophysics, 1, Alexidze str.0193, Tbilisi, Georgia  
Tel.+995.32.33.28.67 - 995 77 79 07 45 Fax. +995 32 33.28.67  
tamaz.chelidze@gmail.com

### **Greece / Grèce**

**ECPFE** - *European Centre on Prevention and Forecasting of Earthquakes (Athens, Greece) / Centre Européen pour la Prévention et la Prévision des Tremblements de Terre (Athènes, Grèce)*

Linda PELLI, Deputy Director ECPFE and E.P.P.O, 32 Xanthou Str., N. Psychiko,  
GR-15451 ATHENS. Tel. +30.210 .672 28000 int 163 +30-6932654032 Fax. +30.210.672 8240  
[lpeli@oasp.gr](mailto:lpeli@oasp.gr)

**ECFF** - *European Centre on Forest Fires / Centre européen sur les Feux de Forêts*

Ioannis MITSOPOULOS  
10 Chrisostomou Smirnis str, Athens, Greece . Tel. +302105063613 - [im@fiactu.org](mailto:im@fiactu.org)

### **Italy / Italie**

**CUEBC** - *European University Centre for the Cultural Heritage (Ravello, Italy) / Centre Universitaire Européen pour les Biens Culturels, (Ravello, Italie)*

Ferruccio FERRIGNI, Coordinator,  
Villa Rufolo, Piazza Duomo 84010 RAVELLO (SA).  
Tel. + 39 089857669 / +39 089848101 – Fax. +39.089.85 7711  
[univeur@univeur.org](mailto:univeur@univeur.org) – [ferrigni@unina.it](mailto:ferrigni@unina.it) - [www.univeur.org](http://www.univeur.org)

**“the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” / “l'ex-République yougoslave de Macédoine”**

**ECILS** - *European Centre on the Vulnerability of Industrial and Lifeline Systems, (Skopje, “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”) / Centre Européen sur la Vulnérabilité des systèmes et réseaux industriels (Skopje, l'ex-République yougoslave de Macédoine)*

Zoran MILUTINOVIC , Director,  
ECILS, Institute of Earthquake Engineering and Engineering Seismology, University « Ss.Cyril and Methodius » Skopje, Salvador Allende St. 73, P.O.Box 101 - 1000 SKOPJE , Ex-République Yougoslave de Macédoine, Tel. +389.2 3.107 701 /+389 2 3107 747 (direct) Fax. +389.2 311216374: [zoran@pluto.iziis.ukim.edu.mk](mailto:zoran@pluto.iziis.ukim.edu.mk);[milutin.zvm@gmail.com](mailto:milutin.zvm@gmail.com)

### **Malta / Malte**

**ICoD** - *Euro-Mediterranean Centre on Insular Coastal Dynamics ( Malta) /-Centre Européen de la Dynamique Côtière Insulaire ( Malte)*

Anton MICALLEF, Director,  
International Environment Institute, University of Malta, Msida MSD 2080,  
Tel/fax. +356.23 40 2013 - +356 9944 5412 - [anton.micallef@um.edu.mt](mailto:anton.micallef@um.edu.mt)

### **Moldova**

**ECMNR - European Centre for Mitigation of Natural Risks / Centre européen pour la Réduction des risques naturels (Chisinau, Moldova)**

Anatolie BANTUS, Director , 75, Alba Iulia str, MD-2071 CHISINAU  
Tel./fax : +373.22 58 15 37 - +373 79698457 [a\\_bantus@yahoo.com](mailto:a_bantus@yahoo.com)

### **Morocco / Maroc**

**CEPRIS** - Euro-Mediterranean Centre for the Evaluation and Prevention of Seismic Risk / Centre Euro-Méditerranéen pour l'Évaluation et la Prévention du Risque Sismique (Rabat)

Azelarab EL MOURAOUAH, Coordonnateur

Angle Avenue des Forces Armées Royales et Avenue Allal El Fassi, Hay Ryad

B.P.8027, 10102 Agdal Nations Unies, CP 10102 Rabat, Maroc

Tel. +212.37.77.86.74 - (212 667 066 441) Fax +212.37.77.13.34

[elmouraouah@cnrst.ma](mailto:elmouraouah@cnrst.ma); [directeur@cnrst.ac.ma](mailto:directeur@cnrst.ac.ma); [elmouraouah@hotmail.ma](mailto:elmouraouah@hotmail.ma)

### **Portugal**

**CERU** - European Centre on Urban Risks, (Lisbon, Portugal) / Centre Européen sur les Risques Urbains (Lisbonne, Portugal)

Maria Paula TEVES-COSTA, Professeur

Av. Elias Garcia, N° 7, 2° P-1000-146 LISBOA

Tel: + 351 217937214 / +351 917 507 500 Fax. +351 21 79 42 572

e-mail: [ceru@sapo.pt](mailto:ceru@sapo.pt); [lavictor@fc.ul.pt](mailto:lavictor@fc.ul.pt); [ptcosta@fc.ul.pt](mailto:ptcosta@fc.ul.pt)

### **Romania / Roumanie**

**ECBR** - European Centre for Rehabilitation of Buildings / Centre Européen pour la Réhabilitation des Bâtiments, Bucharest (Romania)

Emil-Sever GEORGESCU, Director of the European Centre for Buildings' Rehabilitation, The

National Institute for research and development in building urbanism and sustainable

territorial development "Urban - INCERC 266, Pantelimon St.,021652 BUCHAREST Tel. +4021

255 78 66 - 0040740166591 Fax. +4021 255 00 62 - [ssever@incerc2004.ro](mailto:ssever@incerc2004.ro)

### **Russian Federation / Fédération de Russie**

**ECNTRM** - European Centre of New Technologies for the Management of Natural and Technological Major Hazards (Moscow, Russian Federation) / Centre Européen des Nouvelles Technologies pour la Gestion des Risques Naturels et Technologiques Majeurs (Moscou, Russie)

Tatiana NAUMOVA, Executive Secretary

European Center For New Technologies Of Risk Management (ECNTRM), Moscow,

Davydkovskaya 7 Tel: 8 499 449 99 64 - fax. +7 499 443 83 15 [n-tanya@yandex.ru](mailto:n-tanya@yandex.ru)

### **San Marino / Saint Marin**

**CEMEC** - European Centre for Disaster Medicine (San-Marino) / Centre Européen pour la Médecine des Catastrophes, (Saint-Marin)

Alessandro BARELLI, President CEMEC

Anaesthesiology and Intensive Care, University Hospital "A. Gemelli", Rome, Viale Colli

Portuensi 537 00151 Roma Tel : +39 3489764322 - t+39 3489764322 - Fax +39 0635502878 -

[a.barelli@tox.it](mailto:a.barelli@tox.it)

.Cemec Ospedale di Stato 47031 San Marin.

Tel. +378. 99.45.35 Fax. +378.90.37.06 - [cemec@iss.sm](mailto:cemec@iss.sm)

### **Spain / Espagne**

**CEISE** - European Center on Social Research in Emergency Situations / Centre européen de recherche sociale dans les situations d'urgence / Centro Europeo de investigación social de emergencias, Madrid

Juan Carlos ANGUIITA ÁVILA, Chief area studies of documentation

Dirección General de Protección Civil y Emergencias

Quintiliano, 21E - 28002 Madrid Tel: +34 91 537 3287

fax:+34 915628941/26 - +34 689 22 67 51 [jcanguita@procivil.mir.es](mailto:jcanguita@procivil.mir.es) - [www.proteccioncivil.es](http://www.proteccioncivil.es)

### **Ukraine**

**TESEC** - *European Centre of Technological Safety (Kiev, Ukraine) / Centre Européen de Sécurité Technologique, TESEC (Kiev, Ukraine)*

Viktor POIARKOV, Executive Director, P.O.B.#13., Kyiv-110, Ukraine, 03110

Tel.+380 50 312 40 24 - +380 44 332 5905 Fax.+ (+380 44) 2708590

email: [poyarkov@i.kiev.ua](mailto:poyarkov@i.kiev.ua) ; [viktor.poyarkov@gmail.com](mailto:viktor.poyarkov@gmail.com) - [www.tesec-int.org](http://www.tesec-int.org)

### **Experts**

Jean Mathias GOERENS, Président de la Sous-Commission « Audit »,

15 rue Follereau, L-1529 Luxembourg. tel : +352 621 260 452 Fax : +352 2 704 85 68

email : [jmg@pt.lu](mailto:jmg@pt.lu)

Michel François VIGNEAUX

Résidence Pins de Laurenzanne /B, 16 route de Léognan F-33170 Gradignan

Tel +33.556.75.24 25 - 06 86 86 52 62 Fax. +33.5.56.75.24.25

e-mail : [vigneaux.fer@wanadoo.fr](mailto:vigneaux.fer@wanadoo.fr)

## **COUNCIL OF EUROPE / CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE**

### **EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT OF THE EUR-OPA MAJOR HAZARDS AGREEMENT / SECRETARIAT EXECUTIF DE L'ACCORD EUR-OPA RISQUES MAJEURS**

Eladio FERNANDEZ-GALIANO, Secrétaire Exécutif / Executive Secretary

Tel. : +33.3.88.41.2259 Fax. : +33.3.88.41.2787

E-mail : [eladio.fernandez-galiano@coe.int](mailto:eladio.fernandez-galiano@coe.int)

Francesc PLA, Adjoint au Secrétaire Exécutif / Deputy to the Executive Secretary

Tel. : +33.3.90.21.4930 Fax. : +33.3.88.41.2787

E-mail : [francesc.pla@coe.int](mailto:francesc.pla@coe.int)

Caroline SIEBECKE, Tel. : +33 3 88 41 3522 Fax. : +33 3 88 41 2787

E-mail : [caroline.siebecke@coe.int](mailto:caroline.siebecke@coe.int)

### **Interprètes**

Brian KEEGAN [keegan.paris@gmail.com](mailto:keegan.paris@gmail.com)

Jan KROTKI [jan.krotki@gmail.com](mailto:jan.krotki@gmail.com)

Fanny CROISET [f.croiset@aiic.net](mailto:f.croiset@aiic.net) - [f.croiset@gmail.com](mailto:f.croiset@gmail.com)

Irène MARKOWICZ [imark@club-internet.fr](mailto:imark@club-internet.fr)

Nikolay ARTEMOV [n.artemov@yahoo.fr](mailto:n.artemov@yahoo.fr)

Alexei LOBKOV [alobcov@yahoo.com](mailto:alobcov@yahoo.com)

## **APOLOGISED FOR ABSENCE/ EXCUSES**

### **Algeria / Algerie**

**CRSTRA** - *Centre Euro-Méditerranéen de recherche scientifique et technique sur les régions arides Omar El Barnaoui (Biskra, Algérie C)/ Euro-Mediterranean Center on scientific and technical research in arid zones Omar El Barnaoui (Biskra, Algeria)*

Toufik MOTFAOUI, Campus Universitaire BP 1682 RP 07000 Biskra, ALGERIE

Tel.+213.33.73.4214 / 8443 -Fax +213 33 74 18 15

[Crstra\\_biskra@yahoo.fr](mailto:Crstra_biskra@yahoo.fr) - [crstra\\_biskra@hotmail.fr](mailto:crstra_biskra@hotmail.fr) ;[crstra@crstra.dz](mailto:crstra@crstra.dz);

**France**

**EMSC** - *European Mediterranean Seismological Centre (Bruyères-le-Châtel, France)*

**CSEM** - *Centre Sismologique Euro-Méditerranéen, (Bruyères-le-Châtel, France)*

Jean-Remy BOSSU, Secretary General

EMSC c/o CEA, Bât. Sables Centre DAM - Ile de France, Bruyères le Châtel 91297 Arpajon Cedex

Tel :+33 (0)1 69 26 78 14 Fax +33 (0)1 69 26 70 00 - mob : +33 (0) 685541809 [bossu@emsc-csem.org](mailto:bossu@emsc-csem.org); [remy.bossu@cea.fr](mailto:remy.bossu@cea.fr) ;

**Germany / Allemagne**

**GFMC** - *The Global Fire Monitoring Center, Freiburg, Germany / Le Centre mondial de surveillance des incendies, Fribourg, Allemagne*

Johann G. GOLDAMMER

The Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC)

Fire Ecology Research Group, Max Planck Institute for Chemistry c/o Freiburg University,  
Georges-Koehler-Allee 75 D - 79110 Freiburg

Tel:+49-761-808011 - Fax:+49-761-808012 - [johann.goldammer@fire.uni-freiburg.de](mailto:johann.goldammer@fire.uni-freiburg.de)

Website: <http://www.fire.uni-freiburg.de>

**Luxemburg / Luxembourg**

**ECGS** - *European Centre for Geodynamics and Seismology (Walferdange, Luxembourg) / Centre Européen de Géodynamique et de Sismologie, (Walferdange, Luxembourg)*

Adrien OTH

19, rue Josy Welter, L-7256 Walferdange,

Tel: +352 331487 35 - Fax: +352 33148788 - [adrien.oth@ecgs.lu](mailto:adrien.oth@ecgs.lu)

**Russian Federation / Fédération de Russie**

**ECNTRM** - *European Centre of New Technologies for the Management of Natural and Technological Major Hazards (Moscow, Russian Federation) / Centre Européen des Nouvelles Technologies pour la Gestion des Risques Naturels et Technologiques Majeurs (Moscou, Russie)*

Sergei KACHANOV, Vice-Director, All Russian Science Research Institute, Moscow,  
Davydkovskaya 7 Tel: + 7 499 445 4445 - fax. +7 499 443 83 15 [skachanov@inbox.ru](mailto:skachanov@inbox.ru)