



COUNCIL OF EUROPE  
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**Open Partial Agreement on the prevention of, protection against and organisation of relief in major natural and technological disasters**

## **RESOLUTIONS**

**adopted at the 9<sup>th</sup> Ministerial session of the  
EUR-OPA Major Hazards Agreement**

**Isle of Bendor, Bandol, France  
3 - 4 October 2002**

**Strasbourg, 5 November 2002**

Open Partial Agreement on the prevention of, protection against,  
and organisation of relief in major natural and technological disasters

**RESOLUTION**

**adopted<sup>1</sup> at the 9<sup>th</sup> Ministerial session of the  
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- Resolution on Euro-Mediterranean Synergy

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<sup>1</sup> Unanimously

## RESOLUTION ON EURO-MEDITERRANEAN SYNERGY

### THE MINISTERS,

1. Recalling the Resolution on co-operation between the EUR-OPA Major Hazards Agreement and international institutions, adopted at the Agreement's 8<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Session in Athens (21-22 February 2000), in which they noted that in view of the variety, frequency, scale and geographical distribution of natural or technological disasters, many international organisations had drawn up strategies for limiting damage both to the population and to the environment,
2. Considering that the recent AZF technological disaster in Toulouse, the flooding in central Europe, Algeria and Russia, which took many lives and caused social and economic upheaval in several regions, and the growing frequency and scale of such crises oblige policy-makers to seek optimum complementarity in the activities being carried out internationally, and at Euro-Mediterranean level in particular;
3. Stressing the importance they attach to efforts to achieve inter-linkage, co-operation and search for synergy in the field of risk management between the European Commission and the Council of Europe's EUR-OPA Major Hazards Agreement;
4. Having regard to the proposal by the Ukrainian Minister for the management of emergencies and protection of the population against the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster to involve all the member States of the Agreement more closely in European initiatives:

### DECIDE :

- with a view to strengthening the prevention of and preparedness for major natural and technological disasters, to set up a Euro-Mediterranean network based on existing structures, focusing on:
  - a. Procedures and protocols for harmonisation relating to:
    - on-line exchange of information and data concerning the occurrence and effects of disasters
    - requests and proposals for assistance in case of disasters;
  - b. Harmonised and standardised measures concerning:
    - Terminology and definition of risk-management concepts;
    - Risk assessment procedures and techniques; stability of buildings and civil engineering works; safety of chemical, radiological and other hazardous facilities, oil-, gas-, fuel- pipelines;
    - Damage assessment resulting from the occurrence of major disasters;

- Early warning systems for natural hazards, such as earthquakes, floods, landslides, .... and technological hazards, such as industrial and radiological hazards;
- Measurement techniques for chemical and radioactive contamination of the environment due to technological disasters;
- Vocational training, public awareness-raising concerning emergencies, particularly among children, and research efforts in priority areas.

**In this respect they consider that:**

5.
  - the direct operational aspects of crisis management such as the sending of rescue equipment and teams are not the responsibility of the Council of Europe EUR-OPA Major Hazards Agreement; on the other hand, the Agreement's contribution must concern knowledge about hazards and their prevention and in general all information, knowledge and scientific expertise which may facilitate risk-management decision-making;
  - the Council of Europe's EUR-OPA Major Hazards Agreement must make a significant contribution, through its representatives of the network of specialised Euro-Mediterranean centres and its European scientific co-operation networks,;
    - at technical and scientific level to the Euro-Mediterranean efforts in the risk prevention field;
    - to fostering the enactment and harmonisation of legislation compatible with European Union risk-management standards in its member states outside the European Union and not at present applicants for Union membership;
    - to presenting specific legal proposals that might be of relevance to all the Agreement's member States.
6. Concerning co-operation with other European and international institutions, they welcome the co-operation established with:
  - the European Union, particularly with a view to establishing greater complementarity with the mechanism established by the Community, as a priority, in the field of risk prevention;
  - the European Space Agency, in particular under the global environmental safety monitoring programme mounted in co-operation with the European Commission;
  - the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) of the United Nations, particularly concerning the evaluation of the Yokohama Strategy discussed at the meeting of Euro-Mediterranean experts on disaster prevention on the Isle of Bendor, France, on 1 October 2002;

- UNESCO, WHO, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the Stability Pact in the interest of more effective risk prevention;
- the Council of Europe Development Bank, in the field of natural disasters.

**INSTRUCT** the Executive Secretary to implement this resolution in close co-operation with the Presidency and Vice-Presidency of the Agreement.