



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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**PROCIV 185  
COCON 40  
COSDP 1097  
DEVGEN 255  
ENV 912  
FORETS 74  
ONU 105  
RECH 396  
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**NOTE**

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from : Council Secretariat  
to : delegations

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FORETS 66 ONU 99 RECH 359 RELEX 903 SAN 260 TELECOM 192

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Subject : Council Conclusions calling for civil protection capabilities to be enhanced by a European mutual assistance system building on the civil protection modular approach

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Delegations will find in the Annex the Council Conclusions calling for civil protection capabilities to be enhanced by a European mutual assistance system building on the civil protection modular approach, as adopted by the Council on 27 November 2008.

**Council conclusions calling for civil protection capabilities  
to be enhanced by a European mutual assistance system building on  
the civil protection modular approach**

1. **Having regard to** the Council Decision of 8 November 2007 establishing a Community Civil Protection Mechanism (Mechanism Recast)<sup>1</sup>;
2. **Having regard to** the Council Decision of 5 March 2007 establishing a Civil Protection Financial Instrument<sup>2</sup>;
3. **Recalling** the conclusions of the European Council on 16 and 17 June 2005<sup>3</sup>, which called for the development of a rapid reaction capability based on the civil protection modules of the Member States;
4. **Recalling** the Council conclusions of 18 July 2005 on improving European civil protection capabilities<sup>4</sup>, which reaffirm the need to develop a "European Union rapid response capability", based on the civil protection modules of the Member States, as defined in Article 4(3) of the Mechanism-Recast, the modules being independent and self-sufficient units operating under national responsibility, and which could be used alone or in addition to other contributions to tackle natural or man-made disasters inside or outside the Union;
5. **Recalling** the Council conclusions of 12 June 2007 on enhancing the coordination capacity of the Monitoring and Information Centre (MIC) within the Community Civil Protection Mechanism<sup>5</sup>,

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 314, 1.12.2007, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 71, 10.3.2007, p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> 10255/1/05 REV 1, paragraph 19.

<sup>4</sup> OJ C 304, 1.12.2005, p. 1; 10576/05 + COR 1 + COR 2.

<sup>5</sup> 10014/07.

6. **Considering** the Commission communication of 5 March 2008 on reinforcing the Union's disaster response capacity <sup>6</sup> and the Council conclusions of 16 June 2008 on reinforcing the Union's disaster response capacity - towards an integrated approach to managing disasters <sup>7</sup>, covering prevention, preparedness and response;
7. **Recalling** the Council conclusions of 16 June 2008<sup>8</sup> emphasising that reinforcement of the Union's disaster response capacity should be achieved through a balanced approach guided by two principles: national responsibility and EU solidarity;
8. **Considering**, in this context, that a preliminary step is to establish scenarios on the basis of risk assessment and study national capabilities needed and potentially available for deployment through the Community Civil Protection Mechanism;
9. **Acknowledging** the substantial progress already achieved by the Member States and the Commission regarding the implementation of the modular concept;
10. **Considering** that European mutual assistance, based on Member States' civil protection modules and expert teams, as defined in the Mechanism Recast, and including other resources, constitutes an appropriate basic operational capability that might be made available for intervention following a request for assistance. Modules and other resources must be rapidly deployable, self-sufficient, and have a high level of interoperability;
11. **Pointing out** that, in recent years, the frequency and severity of natural and man-made disasters have increased;
12. **Emphasising** the need for the Member States to have adequate national capabilities and for the EU Member States to anticipate the occurrence of major disasters and to act together when these disasters overwhelm the response capability of the affected country;

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<sup>6</sup> 7562/08, COM(2008) 130.

<sup>7</sup> 10128/08.

<sup>8</sup> 10128/08.

## **The Council of the European Union**

- 13. Calls on** the Commission in close cooperation with the Member States to further strengthen the European mutual assistance, based on an improved cooperation within the Community Civil Protection Mechanism, which should take into account scenarios and risk analysis, in order to anticipate potential disasters, thus enabling a rapid and effective EU response through the Mechanism;
- 14. Calls on** the Member States to commit themselves in principle and on a voluntary basis to work towards the enhancement of the availability of their modules and other intervention capabilities. Final confirmation by the Member State will be needed before mobilisation;
- 15. Welcomes** the intention of the Commission to take into account the European mutual assistance in the implementation of Council Decision 2007/779/EC, Euratom establishing a Community Civil Protection Mechanism, notably to:
  - (a) lay down guidelines on the preparation and deployment of assessment and coordination teams in the event of a disaster;
  - (b) promote activities designed to improve team preparedness (training, exercises, exchange of experts, etc.);
  - (c) improve the interoperability of equipment and communication – transmission networks;
  - (d) lay down recommendations aiming at more efficient action and cooperation between local assistance and civil protection teams and the civil protection modules or teams deployed on the ground in other Member States or third countries;
  - (e) continue to carry out lessons-learned exercises each time Member States' civil protection modules or teams intervene as part of a coordinated European Union response, and make best use of the existing lessons learnt programme, in order to enhance the effectiveness of the response;

- 16. Encourages** the Member States to:
- further develop and/or identify civil protection modules and to register them as soon as possible. In doing so, Member States are invited to pay particular attention to those types of modules that are not yet or only partially covered;
  - actively work towards the development and registration of multinational modules, based for instance on risk analyses, in particular cross-border, *inter alia* in order for the Community Civil Protection Mechanism to benefit from regional cooperation;
- 17. Calls on** the Member States supported by the Commission to improve the interoperability of modules and other resources, including of equipment and communication – transmission networks, in order to maximise the efficiency of Member States' civil protection assistance;
- 18. Calls on** the Commission and the Member States to further accelerate the deployment of EU assessment and coordination teams by setting up a core group of experts who might be deployed very rapidly as the first step of the deployment of the team; confirmation by the Member States will be needed before the deployment of their experts;
- 19. Calls on** the Commission and the Member States to put in place practical arrangements for the early deployment of Technical Assistance Support Teams (TAST) to maximise the efficiency of the EU assessment and coordination team on site;
- 20. Takes note of** the existing preparatory action on an EU rapid response capability<sup>9</sup> and **calls** for its evaluation, notably with regard to the follow-up of these conclusions;

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<sup>9</sup> Budget of the EU for 2008, budget line 07 04 05.

## 21. Further invites:

### – the Member States to:

- promote the availability of their modules and other intervention resources, in order to further improve European mutual assistance;
- identify on a voluntary basis experts who might be made available at short notice to reinforce the MIC during major emergencies;
- make available experts at short notice in support of the Mechanism, with a view to accelerating the deployment of EU assessment and coordination teams.

### – the Commission to:

- reinforce the Mechanism's Monitoring and Information Centre with a view to:
  - (a) providing the necessary advice to the Member States for the identification and registration of national and multinational civil protection modules and other resources, including through the provision of guidelines where useful, and providing adequate complementary training and exercising of the modules and their key staff;
  - (b) studying the mapping of national civil protection modules;
  - (c) studying disaster scenarios and undertaking risk assessment to identify potential ways to improve prevention, preparedness and response and take advantage of early warning to anticipate and speed up this response;
  - (d) assisting Member States through the organisation of simulation exercises specifically designed to test the mobilisation, interoperability and coordination of civil protection modules;
- establish appropriate procedures for identification and selection of experts;
- provide appropriate training for the experts identified by the Member States for reinforcing the MIC during major emergencies;

- set up a core group of assessment and coordination experts with a view to facilitating the selection of team leaders and other experts, and to accelerating the deployment of EU assessment and coordination teams;
- evaluate the preparatory action on an EU rapid response capability and provide appropriate opportunities for Member States' experts to contribute to the evaluation process;
- report to the Council on the progress made in implementing these measures before the end of 2009.

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