



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 27 June 2005**

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**"I/A" ITEM NOTE**

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from : Working Party on Civil Protection  
to : Coreper / Council

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No. prev. doc. : 10360/05 PROCIV 90 PESC 548 COSDP 428 COCON 5 RELEX 328  
DEVGEN 125  
No. Cion prop. : 9996/05 PROCIV 85 PESC 505 COSDP 392 COCON 4 RELEX 306  
DEVGEN 113

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Subject : **Adoption of Council conclusions on improving the European Civil Protection Capabilities**

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Following the tsunami on 26 December 2004, the Council adopted on 31 January 2005 an action plan on the tsunamis and the earthquakes in the Indian Ocean to coordinate all the resources available to deal as effectively as possible with the consequences of such events, whether natural or man-made. <sup>1</sup> The Commission and the SG/HR subsequently drew up proposals for reinforcing the Union's rapid reaction capability in such cases. <sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 5788/05.

<sup>2</sup> 8430/05, 8382/05, 8204/05.

On 23-24 May 2005, the Council (GAERC) took note of a Presidency report on the follow-up to the Action Plan, which referred to the discussions undertaken on 12-13 May by the Directors-General of Civil Protection and to the work being undertaken by the Civil Protection Working Party<sup>3</sup>.

The Civil Protection Working Party established the draft conclusions in the Annex, which contain the first response of Civil Protection to the Tsunami Action Plan of 31 January 2005 and, in particular, to its request for improving the "European Union's rapid response capability"<sup>4</sup>.

The conclusions aim at improving civil protection cooperation under an all-hazard approach<sup>5</sup>. The improvements are based on risk assessments, deficit analyses and lessons learned<sup>6</sup>. They should support the capabilities of the United Nations in coordinating civil protection interventions in third countries and contribute to the strengthening of the UN capacity building for rapid action in the face of humanitarian disasters.<sup>7</sup>

The Commission together with the Member States will, within their competences, further develop a modular approach through a programme which will establish scenarios<sup>8</sup> and capability assessments<sup>9</sup> leading up to civil protection modules capable of responding to specific needs<sup>10</sup>, trained to work together and to be interoperable<sup>11</sup>, and with EU insignia<sup>12</sup>.

The conclusions also concern the facilitation of transport<sup>13</sup>.

The cooperation with the military would be improved<sup>14</sup>, together with the on-site assessment capacity<sup>15</sup> and coordination capacity<sup>16</sup>.

Early warning systems and preventive action will be improved<sup>17</sup>.

The MIC will remain available for the consular cooperation.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> 8961/1/05.

<sup>4</sup> Nos. 3 and 7 of the draft conclusions; compare with chapeau of D and 14 of the Tsunami Action Plan.

<sup>5</sup> No. 7; compare with 14 (a) of the Tsunami Action Plan.

<sup>6</sup> No. 8; compare with chapeau of D.

<sup>7</sup> No. 6; comp. 13 (h), 14 (g) and 17.

<sup>8</sup> No. 7; comp. 13 (e).

<sup>9</sup> Nos. 7 and 9 a); comp. 13 (e).

<sup>10</sup> No. 7 and 9 b); comp. 13 (e).

<sup>11</sup> No. 9 c); comp. 13 (f) and (g).

<sup>12</sup> No. 9 d).

<sup>13</sup> No. 9 i).

<sup>14</sup> No. 9 e); comp. 13 (f) and 14 (f).

<sup>15</sup> No. 9 f); comp. 13 (a).

<sup>16</sup> No. 9 g); comp. 14 (h).

<sup>17</sup> Nos. 9 h) and 11; comp. 17.

<sup>18</sup> No. 10; comp. 16.

To a wide extent, it should be possible to implement these conclusions within the framework of the existing structures. Where necessary, the legislation will be amended.<sup>19</sup> The financial framework must be respected.

The above rapid response capability in civil protection will be available for use in the framework of the EU Plan of Action on combating terrorism, the Hague Programme on strengthening freedom, security and justice in the EU and the Civilian Headline Goal 2008.<sup>20</sup>

The draft conclusions also take into account that the European Council of 16-17 June 2005 designated as a priority in the fight against terrorism "the strengthening of civil protection capabilities, particularly the medical resources available to deal with a bioterrorist attack, and the development of a rapid reaction capability based on the civil protection modules of the Member States".<sup>21</sup>

Coreper will hold as soon as possible a discussion examining aspects of the establishment of the European Response Capability. It will take into account the questions enumerated in the Tsunami Action Plan and in the current Council conclusions. It will ensure the consistency between work carried out by all relevant bodies on the basis of the contributions submitted to the Council by the Commission and the Secretary General/High Representative.

The Council will return to the whole issue before the end of 2005.

**The Civil Protection Working Party suggests that, subject to the lifting of the general scrutiny reservations by all delegations, Coreper propose that the Council adopt the draft Council conclusions in the Annex and agree to their publication in the Official Journal.**

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<sup>19</sup> No. 12; comp. 14 (i).

<sup>20</sup> See 14(d) of the Tsunami Action Plan, 9809/1/05 + ADD 1 and 2, 16054/04 no. 2.4 and 15547/04 Annex III to the Annex.

<sup>21</sup> 10255/05.

**DRAFT**  
**COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON IMPROVING  
THE EUROPEAN CIVIL PROTECTION CAPABILITIES**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

1. HAVING REGARD TO:

- the conclusions of the Council of 7 January 2005 on the earthquake and tsunami in the Indian Ocean <sup>22</sup>;
- the European Union Action Plan of 31 January 2005 on the earthquake and tsunami in the Indian Ocean <sup>23</sup>;
- the conclusions of the Council of 4 October 2004 on strengthening the overall Civil Protection Capacity in the European Union <sup>24</sup>;
- the conclusions of the Council of 25 November 2004 on prevention, preparedness and response to terrorist attacks <sup>25</sup>;
- the Communication from the Commission of 20 April 2005 on Improving the Community Civil Protection Mechanism <sup>26</sup>;
- the Communication from the Commission of 20 April 2005 on Reinforcing EU Disaster and Crisis Response in third countries <sup>27</sup>;
- the note from the Secretary-General/High Representative of 20 April 2005 on the Follow-up to the EU Action Plan following the earthquake and tsunamis in the Indian Ocean <sup>28</sup>;

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<sup>22</sup> 5187/05.

<sup>23</sup> 5788/05.

<sup>24</sup> 11549/04.

<sup>25</sup> 15232/04.

<sup>26</sup> 8430/05 - COM(2005) 137 final.

<sup>27</sup> 8382/05 - COM(2005) 153 final.

<sup>28</sup> 8204/05.

- the note from the Presidency of 20 May on the Follow-up to the EU Action Plan following the earthquake and tsunamis in the Indian Ocean <sup>29</sup>;
- the Presidency conclusions of the European Council of Brussels of 16 and 17 June 2005, which wished addressing as a priority during the second half of 2005 the strengthening of civil protection capabilities, particularly the medical resources available to deal with a bioterrorist attack, and the development of a rapid reaction capability based on the civil protection modules of the Member States <sup>30</sup>.

2. BEARING IN MIND that the financial implications of the proposed improvements, and in particular of the proposal establishing a Rapid Response and Preparedness Instrument for major emergencies, must be compatible with the financial framework set for the period 2007-2013 and respect the principle of subsidiarity.
3. REAFFIRMS the need to develop an "European Union rapid response capability" to tackle natural or man-made disasters inside or outside the Union, drawing on national resources and teams trained to work together.
4. WELCOMES in general the Communication from the Commission on Improving the Community Civil Protection Mechanism, which sets out short term and medium term proposals to strengthen European cooperation in the framework of the Civil Protection Mechanism.
5. INVITES the Commission together with the Member States to improve, within their respective competences, the European civil protection cooperation, including the strengthening of the Community Civil Protection Mechanism, in order to ensure that the European Union can provide civil protection assistance rapidly and effectively in case of all kinds of emergencies inside and outside the Union.

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<sup>29</sup> 8961/1/05 REV 1.

<sup>30</sup> 10255/05.

6. UNDERLINES the overall role and responsibility of the United Nations in coordinating international civil protection assistance in third countries, where present. The EU should support the capabilities of the United Nations in coordinating civil protection interventions in third countries. In this regard, the European rapid response capability could contribute to the strengthening of the UN capacity building for rapid action in the face of humanitarian disasters.
7. ENCOURAGES the Commission together with the Member States, within their respective competences, to further develop a modular approach through a program which will establish scenarios, capability assessment, operational plans, training and exercises and common methodologies for risk assessment under an all-hazard approach covering natural and man-made disasters, including terrorism. This program should drive action, building on the principles of subsidiarity and complementarity, and of operating under national responsibility. The civil protection identified modules are one in a number of significant assets in the EU rapid response and will be able to operate independently or in cooperation with or support to other EU bodies or international institutions.
8. STRESSES that evaluations, taking into account risk assessments, deficit analyses and lessons learned from emergencies, training and exercises, are the basis for decisions on improving the response capacity of the EU.
9. ENCOURAGES the Commission and the Member States to take forward, in the short term, work in the following priority areas:
  - a) further assess the civil protection capabilities which the Member States may make available to each other for all types of major disasters;
  - b) develop a rapid response capability based on the civil protection modules of the Member States and for that purpose establish a program building on the principles of subsidiarity and complementarity, the modules being independent and self-sufficient units operating under national responsibility, which could be used alone or in addition with other contributions;

- c) further develop training activities, exercises and the exchange of experts to stimulate the capacity to work together and to promote interoperability;
  - d) develop at the latest by 31 December 2005, in addition to national insignia, common EU insignia for intervention and assessment/ coordination personnel on site;
  - e) further develop civil-military cooperation with the EU Military Staff, in particular the Civil-Military Cell;
  - f) strengthen the on site assessment of needs by developing a common assessment methodology, based on internationally agreed methodologies where they exist, and by reinforcing the assessment capacity;
  - g) strengthen the capacity to facilitate the coordination on site and at head quarters, both within the EU and with relevant international organizations;
  - h) reinforce the links between the Mechanism and early warning systems at EU and UN level;
  - i) further work on facilitating the transport of civil protection assistance.
10. WELCOMES the Commission's offer to make the Monitoring and Information Centre (MIC) available for the European consular cooperation in order to support EU citizens victims of disasters in third countries.
11. INVITES the Commission to submit as soon as possible more complete proposals on strengthening preventive action, inspired by the terms of the Civil Protection Action Programme <sup>31</sup>, the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2016 <sup>32</sup> and the European Union Action Plan on the earthquakes and tsunamis in the Indian Ocean <sup>33</sup>, and enhancing detection and early warning systems in general, and in particular for the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean.

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<sup>31</sup> Council Decision 1999/847/EC of 9 December 1999 establishing a Community action programme in the field of civil protection (OJ L 327, 21.12.1999, p. 53), amended by Council Decision 2005/12/EC of 20 December 2004 (OJ L 6, 8.1.2005, p. 7).

<sup>32</sup> Resolution on the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 : Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters, adopted on 22 January 2005 by the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (A.CONF.206/6).

<sup>33</sup> 5788/05.

12. INVITES the Commission to submit as soon as possible, and at the latest by October 2005, further legislative proposals for improving civil protection cooperation, including the Community Mechanism, taking into account the above conclusions.
  
13. WILL RETURN to the whole issue dealing with the European rapid response capability before the end of 2005.

