**11th PPRD South “prevention and preparedness”**

**workshop for staff-level officials**

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***“Increasing disaster resilience in urban settings”***

**Lisbon, Portugal**

**15-16 October 2012**

**PPRD SOUTH PROGRAMME BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Successor of the previous EU funded “Pilot” and “Bridge” programmes on Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in Civil Protection, in March 2009 the **Euromed Programme on Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Natural and Man-made Disasters** (“PPRD South” or “Programme” – [www.euromedcp.eu](http://www.euromedcp.eu)) started under the service contract between the EC EuropeAid Development and Cooperation Office and the Consortium established by the Italian Civil Protection Department, jointly with the Civil Protection authorities of Algeria Egypt and France[[1]](#footnote-1), and UNISDR – The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. The Programme works jointly with 14 Civil Protection/Civil Defense Authorities in countries in the Mediterranean region (the “Partner Countries”).

PPRD South aims to contribute to reinforce the quality of Civil Protection services in the Euro-Mediterranean region and to continue institutional cooperation in the field, both between the EU and the Partner Countries and among the Partner Countries themselves. For this purpose, PPRD South has planned a number of activities, including some initiatives aimed to improve knowledge in the Partner Countries of existing methodologies practices for effective disasters’ prevention and preparedness, at the regional, national and local levels.

The PPRD South organises this event in cooperation with UNISDR – The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction Regional Offices for Europe and Arab States.

1. **INTRODUCTION**

**Concept of resilience**

Reducing losses through initiatives aimed at mitigating hazards and reducing vulnerability is a priority for **Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)**.

Much can be done to reduce the risks of casualties and the socio-economic effects of disasters, even if damage cannot substantially be abated. Societies can be strengthened to resist the impact of disasters by devoting resources and organisation to that.

In this context, disaster **resilience** is defined as *“the ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate to and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions. Resilience refers to the ability to resile from or spring back from a shock”*[[2]](#footnote-2)*.*

Resilience is a fundamental component of DRR, where it interacts with the concepts of copingandcapacity. A society that is resilient to hazards has developed its ability to cope with them. This involves both preparedness and setting aside resources against future losses (i.e. capacity).

The resilience of a community against hazards – or the sustained ability of a community to withstand and recover from adversity – has become a key policy issue at the international, national and local levels. Its achievement, in particular, requires multi-disciplinary efforts and is determined by the degree to which the community itself has the necessary resources and is capable of organizing itself both prior to times of need and during disastrous events, and is able to design and implement an overall strategy for adapting to and mitigating the impact of extreme events.

**Resilience in urban settings**

*“Cities and urban areas represent dense and complex systems of interconnected services. As such, they face a growing number of issues that drive disaster risk. Strategies and policies can be developed to address each of these issues, as part of an overall vision to make cities of all sizes and profiles more resilient and livable”[[3]](#footnote-3)*

More than half of the world’s population now lives in urbanized areas. Urban settlements, in particular, constitute lifelines of societies and engines for innovation and development.

Rapid urban growth though poses many challenges to city authorities and, if not properly managed, may be cause of further vulnerabilities, especially in middle and low-income countries, where the risk of the devastating effects of disasters is highly concentrated.

Cities and towns are on the frontline when it comes to economic losses due to the rising frequency and intensity of disasters.

Recent major disasters occurred in urban settlements around the world remind both the increasing disaster risk faced by urban settings and the need to ensure and strengthen the resilience of the built environment towards potential hazard threats.

The Arab States region is characterised by a high population growth and very high growth of often unplanned urbanisation at a rate of 6%, localised poverty and inequality and weak disaster management systems. Today, urban areas account for 56% of the region’s population and is projected to increase to 66% by 2020. This poses inherent challenges to provide essential basic services including for fresh water delivery and sewage systems, energy, waste management and transport to all urban dwellers. At the same time, several cities are exposed to natural hazards including earthquakes, flooding and/or sea-level rise, among them Aleppo, Algiers, Amman, Agadir, Aqaba, Beirut, Damascus, Gaza, Jeddah, Sana’a and Tunis. Climate change induced sea-level rise is threatening coastal zones in the region including cities like Alexandria, Casablanca, Eden, Manama, Nouakchott, Tunis and others. Heat spells are already affecting the Arab States and increase health risk in the region’s cities.

Europe is a region exposed to a wide range of natural hazards such as storms, drought, heat waves, floods, earthquakes, avalanches and landslides which continuously cause human and economic losses. Despite the European wealth of expertise, knowledge and know-how in risk reduction, statistics show that vulnerability to hazards in the region is increasing with adverse impacts on the economy. Most of the damages are due to hydro-meteorological events, often linked to climate change.

Reducing risks in urban settings and part of sustainable urbanization can contribute as well to reducing poverty, increasing growth and delivering overall social equity.

1. **PURPOSE OF THE WORKSHOP AND ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED**

Conceived as a follow-up initiative to the PPRD South workshop on *“community disaster resilience”* (Madrid, Spain, 12-15 September 2011), this workshop aims at developing the capacities of civil protection services and municipalities’ staff with technical expertise and/or planning background from the PPRD partner countries on urban risk reduction to make their cities more resilient to disasters.

To this end, the workshop targets to first improve awareness of DRR issues related to urban settings and to discuss initiatives and good practices from the Euro-Mediterranean region in reducing urban risks.

Secondly, it seeks to introduce participants to select tools to build urban resilience, including the World Disaster Reduction Campaign on Making Cities Resilient: “*My City is getting ready*”, the Mayor’s Handbook for urban resilience and the Local Government Self-Assessment Tool (LGSAT) to track and assess the status and progress in building urban resilience for intended subsequent implementation by municipalities. The workshop will highlight and discuss the “*10 Essentials*” for urban resilience. Specifically participants will be introduced to urban risk and vulnerability assessment, national disaster loss accounting and generally to other measures for urban and land use planning, contingency planning for major natural hazards in cities, multi-stakeholder dialogue for urban resilience, education and public awareness, and results from research conducted on risks affecting complex urban environments.

It is envisaged that the discussion during the workshop will be shaped around the following main issues:

* Urban disaster risk and risk reduction – what are we talking about?
* What are the key measures in urban risk reduction and how can national governments and local authorities (i.e. municipalities) support the achievement of urban risk reduction?
* What are the Characteristics of a Disaster Resilient City?
* Is it possible to identify and map risk areas?
* Why is it important and how to conduct proper disaster loss accounting?
* What are the World Disaster Reduction Campaign and its Ten Essentials?
* How can effective urban risk reduction contribute to increased growth?
* How can linkages and coordination between national disaster management authorities and other relevant stakeholders be reinforced to ensure strengthened disaster resilience/DRR in urban settings?
* Which tools can be used to build urban resilience?

Reflecting the composition of the audience, it aims to discuss and build effective partnerships between multiple stakeholders concerned with increasing DRR/disaster resilience in urbanized areas in view of further engagement for urban resilience including as part of the World Disaster Reduction Campaign (i.e. civil protection authorities and municipal services, but also national governments, national disaster management authorities, private sector, civil society organizations, urban residents, etc.).

The urban resilience workshop is taking place back to back to another PPRD organised workshop on multi-hazard risk assessment, which will deepen the understanding of participants of this thematic and illustrate them to practical experience of the city of Lisbon. Participants of this workshop are expected to attend also the second workshop.

1. Respectively the *Ministère de l’Intérieur et des Collectivités Locales, Direction Générale de la Protection Civile* in Algeria, the *Ministry of the Interior, General Administration of Civil Protection* in Egypt and the Mini*stère de l’Intérieur, de l’Outre-mer et des Collectivités Territoriales, Direction de la Sécurité Civile* in France. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. UNISDR Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction 2009. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. UNISDR “How to make Cities More Resilient – A Handbook for Local Government Leaders”; A contribution to the global campaign 2010-2015, Making Cities Resilient – My City is Getting Ready! March 2012 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)