

34

**Civil Protection
as a Euro-
-Mediterranean
Project: the Case
for Practical
Co-operation**

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Pedro Courela
Instituto de Estudos Estratégicos
e Internacionais (IEEI), Lisbon

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| | |
|--|----|
| I. Introduction: Reviving Security Dialogue in the Euro-Mediterranean Region | 05 |
| II. Civil Protection: Basic Facts | 06 |
| The Targets of Civil Protection | |
| National Responsibility/International Solidarity | |
| Civil Protection Challenges in the Euro-Mediterranean Region | |
| III. Civil Protection in the Context of European Integration | 10 |
| Background | |
| The Creation of the Community Mechanism for Civil Protection | |
| The Shift in Civil Protection Priorities | |
| IV. Co-operation in Practice: EMP and Civil Protection | 12 |
| V. Conclusions and Recommendations: Linking an Enhanced EU Civil Protection Co-operation With Mediterranean Dialogue | 14 |

Since its inception practitioners and observers alike have described the political and security dialogue of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) as an essential instrument for the achievement of a Euro-Mediterranean area of peace and stability and to increase confidence among partners. However, almost 10 years on from the Barcelona conference, and despite regular Senior Officials' meetings and various initiatives¹, the dialogue has produced few practical results and is clearly the 'weak' chapter of the Partnership.

Obstacles to an effective security dialogue and the lack of substantial confidence-building measures are well known. However, the negative assessment of results so far should not lead to the sidestepping of the priorities set in Barcelona for this area. Rather, issues and areas on which progress is feasible need to be identified, even if advances in those areas may initially take place outside the framework of the EMP.

Current attempts by the EU to engage the Mediterranean partners in its Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) should be seen as an attempt to revive the Barcelona political and security dialogue and address an aspect of EU integration that has an inevitable impact on the Partnership and on the prospects for North-South confidence building measures. The recent initiative of Euro-Mediterranean ESDP dialogue puts the emphasis on the exchange of information about the objectives and the developments of ESDP on the one hand, and on the possibility of involvement of Mediterranean partners in crisis management operations led by the EU, on the other.

The focus of this initiative is thus to ensure the transparency of EU security and defence and dissipate fears among southern elites and public that ESDP was created and developed to deal with threats from the South. Indeed, studies have shown that the Mediterranean partners lack information and knowledge about European security and defence policy in the South. Furthermore, reactions in the South to EU ambitions in these areas range from an expectation of increased European assertiveness *vis-à-vis* the United States in the resolution of crisis in the Mediterranean, to fear of growing EU intrusion in what are seen by Southern elites as 'internal affairs'². The adoption in December 2003 by the European Council in Brussels of the European Security Strategy (which includes an analysis of potential threats) is a further element reinforcing the need for a more comprehensive dialogue between partners.

ESDP dialogue should also be seen as an opportunity to depart from the purely consultative nature of relations in the political and security area, and to move towards the adoption of concrete projects of mutual interest, so that achievements contribute to the increase of confidence among the partners.

It is from the prism of practical co-operation in confidence-building measures that this paper looks at civil protection. Even if co-operation in this area is not exactly a new development and does not stem from ESDP as such, it is an area where lessons can be drawn for other initiatives, not only because of the experience already gained in the context of the EMP but also because of the increasing salience of civil protection in European integration and its blending with what was traditionally the domain of foreign and security policy.

The paper begins with a presentation of basic facts about civil protection (with an emphasis on the particular challenges faced by the Euro-Mediterranean region in this field) and then traces the evolution of intra-EU co-operation in the field, focusing on recent developments, including provisions from the Draft European Constitution. It then assesses the existing project of co-operation on civil protection between the EU and the Mediterranean Partners in the context of the EMP and concludes with an analysis of the prospects for future co-operation in this field.

I. Introduction: Reviving Security Dialogue in the Euro-Mediterranean Region



1. An example is the training and information seminars for diplomats and programmes for the promotion on human rights and democracy in the Mediterranean region.

2. IEEI/CIDOB/GERM, *European Defence: Perceptions vs. Realities*, EuroMeSCo Paper 16, June 2002.

II. Civil Protection: Basic Facts

The Targets of Civil Protection

There is no universal definition of civil protection. In fact, the diversity of national structures set up to deal with civil protection tasks show that different countries have varying notions of what it means and entails. In broad terms, it can be said that civil protection (or 'civil defence' as it is referred to in certain countries) entails the guarantee of adequate means to ensure the safety of populations (as well as their property) from disasters and dangers or risks to which they may be subjected. However, it is probably more useful to define civil protection by mentioning its functions and targets than making an all-encompassing statement.

In general terms, it is possible to divide disasters that require civil protection intervention into four major groups: natural disasters, technological disasters, public health disasters and criminal disasters³. This division should in no way be seen as rigid, since many disasters belong to more than one of these groups.

Natural disasters represent the most common type and result from *phenomena* such as hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, landslides, wild fires or heat and cold waves. With the advance of science and technology, the capacity to predict and prevent this type of disasters has improved considerably, although there is a tendency for such occurrences to increase because – among other reasons – of intense urbanisation and mass pollution.

Technological disasters include radioactive accidents, transportation accidents, nuclear accidents or the leakage of hazardous materials, as well as environmental degradation. Technological accidents can sometimes be the main cause of natural disasters, such as landslides after the construction of roads and other infrastructures.

Public health disasters can be caused by the rapid spread of highly contagious diseases such as SARS, but they may also originate from a terrorist attack with biological weapons.

Finally, catastrophes with criminal origins can be the result of terrorist acts, vandalism and large-scale fraud, such as the unauthorised use of computer systems for the spread of computer viruses.

What is important to retain from this typology is that civil protection services must be ready to intervene in a wide variety of situations that cover most aspects of social life. Some of the accidents described above are the consequence of modern technologies and may possess a transnational character, forcing civil protection services to constantly improve their methods and instruments of combat.

The functions of civil protection are also varied and include prevention, management during and after the disasters, mitigation and training. The prevention of natural and man-made disasters requires a regular analysis of the dangers and risks to which a country or region are subject, as well as general and specific rescue plans to avoid hazardous interventions.

Disaster management involves a command structure and sharing of responsibilities between the various protagonists. In view of the increasing number of actors likely to be more or less involved in the disaster only a command unit is capable of ensuring the efficiency of rescue operations. Mitigation of the disaster's effects consist of efforts organised by the affected State to provide moral and material support to the victims and to promote the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the disaster area.

Finally, basic training and on-going training of rescue teams is the best guarantee of highly effective crisis management. The State's responsibility for training may be complemented by bilateral collaboration with other States.

³. *Os desafios da protecção civil: uma perspectiva europeia*, Report prepared by IEEI for the Portuguese Ministry of the Interior, December 2003.

Natural disasters with devastating effects are part of the collective memory of every human society. Devising ways to prevent and contain such disasters, and the organisation of services for combating its effects and the assistance to those affected were, at first, the concern and the responsibility of the affected populations themselves. With the development of the modern State, such functions have been transferred progressively to the latter and, to some extent, justify the organisation of individuals into political entities. In other words, civil protection embodies one of the core functions of the State enshrined in most modern constitutions – guaranteeing the security of its citizens.

Thus, it is not surprising that the notion of national responsibility for assisting disaster victims within the boundaries of the state is universally accepted. This obligation is clearly reflected in Resolution 2034 (XX) of 7 December 1965 of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly, which calls upon Member States to “envisage the possibility of establishing an appropriate national planning and operational system best adapted to their particular situation, with a view to defining the scope and nature of the assistance required and to centralise the management of rescue operations”⁴.

Despite the recognition of the prime responsibility of the State in dealing with its disasters, it is also a fact that the development of relations between different states has fostered some forms of ‘international solidarity’, which evolved into organised assistance from one State to the territory of another State affected by a natural or man-made disaster. As the number of risks that the State must face grows, it becomes clear that there is a limit to the national capacity to provide an adequate response to the consequences of disasters. Solidarity in relief efforts was at first directed to neighbouring regions, but has gradually widened and it is possible to speak today of ‘global solidarity’ towards the victims of major catastrophes.

The fact that a natural disaster in a specific country (especially if the country in question has little means to face the consequences of the disaster) triggers the assistance from a variety of countries all over the world has created the need for organising and co-ordinating foreign assistance to natural disasters. Civil protection services have, among themselves, established a network of contacts, while international organisations, namely the UN, try to ensure the co-ordination of international assistance on the ground. This paper focuses primarily on EU efforts to co-ordinate such assistance, but other regional organisations such as NATO⁵ also have schemes to increase the efficiency of multilateral efforts for responding to catastrophes inside or outside the boundaries of their members.

National Responsibility/International Solidarity



4. Quoted in *The role of the State in the field of protection and assistance in case of disasters*, International Civil Defence Organisation (www.icdo.org).

5. In 1998 NATO created the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Co-ordination Centre (EADRCC). EADRCC is basically a mechanism to facilitate the co-ordination of disaster relief assistance from the 46 members of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. After the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, one of the main aims of the Centre is training to ensure a coherent response to the effects of terrorist attacks. For more details, see <http://www.nato.int/eadrcc/mcda-e.pdf>.

Civil Protection Challenges in the Euro-Mediterranean Region

The Euro-Mediterranean region regularly faces three main types of natural disasters: earthquakes, forest fires and floods. As maps 1, 2 and 3 show, the regions with a higher risk of seismic activity, as well as higher levels of seismicity, are precisely those around the Mediterranean Sea.

Map 1
Earthquakes in the Euro-Mediterranean Region in 2003

Source: EMSC, 2004

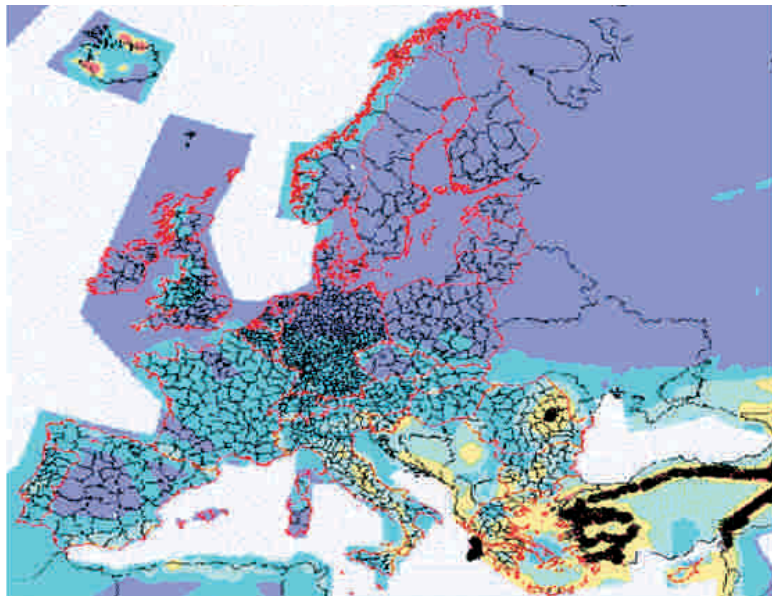
- 5 last relocations
- Unspecified Mag.
- Mag < 3
- 3 ≤ Mag < 4
- 4 ≤ Mag < 5
- 5 ≤ Mag < 6
- Mag ≥ 6



Map 2
Earthquakes Risk in the Euro-Mediterranean Region

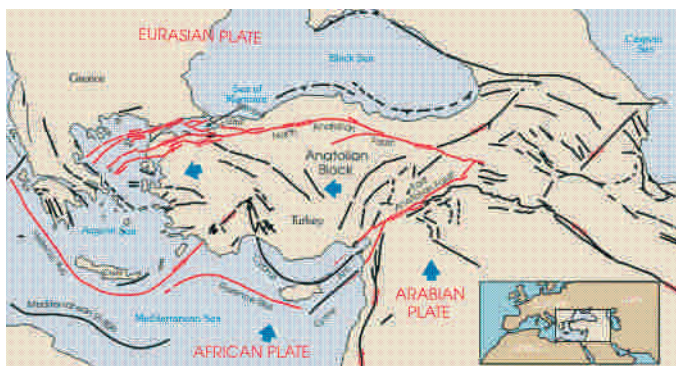
Source: ESPON Database

- Very Low Hazard
- Low Hazard
- Moderate Hazard
- High Hazard
- Very High Hazard

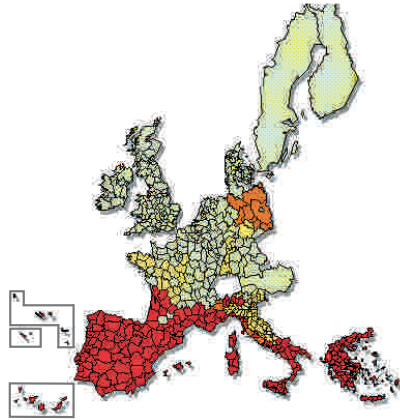


Map 3
Tectonic Setting in Greece and Turkey

Source: USGS, 2003



As regards forest fires and floods, the current changes in global climate have led to an increase in the likelihood of the two latter types of disasters (see map 4)⁶. The very high concentration of populations in urban areas is another factor that makes this region particularly vulnerable in terms of potential human casualties in the aftermath of a natural disaster. Finally, the levels of economic development and industrialisation raise the chances of technological and environmental disasters considerably.⁷



Map 4
Risk of Forest Fires
in the Europe

Source: European Commission



Simply looking at events shows that this region has suffered various major natural disasters in the recent years. Major floods and forest fires are now recurrent *phenomena* on both sides of the Mediterranean, with record-breaking figures for total burnt land in the fires that ravaged Southern Europe in the Summer of 2003. Earthquakes have claimed huge losses, both in human lives and infrastructures, in several spots of the region in the past decade, such as Italy (1997), Turkey (1999, 2003), Greece (1999), Algeria (2003) and Morocco (2004).

As for man-made disasters, some of the most tragic examples have taken place in European territory, such as the explosion of the AZF factory in France (2001), the chemical spillage in the Mare Bay (Romania and Bulgaria, 2003). Also worth noting were the major disasters of maritime pollution with spilled oil in France (Erika, 1999) and Spain and Portugal (Prestige, 2002).

Some major disasters in Europe

Earthquakes

| | | |
|------|-------------------|------------------|
| 1999 | Greece and Turkey | over 17,000 dead |
| 1980 | Italy | 2,739 dead |
| 1976 | Italy | 977 dead |

Floods

| | |
|------|--|
| 2002 | Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, United Kingdom |
| 2001 | Hungary, Poland, Romania, United Kingdom |
| 2000 | France, Italy, Spain, United Kingdom |

Landslides

| | | |
|------|----------------|------------|
| 1998 | Italy | 159 dead |
| 1976 | United Kingdom | 144 dead |
| 1963 | Italy | 1,759 dead |

Forest Fires

France, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain: each Year

Technical disasters

| | | | |
|------|------------------|-------------------------------------|---------|
| 2001 | France | AZF factory explosion | 29 dead |
| 2000 | Hungary, Romania | Baia Mare chemical spill | |
| 2000 | Netherlands | Enschede firework factory explosion | 20 dead |

Accidental marine pollution

| | | |
|------|----------------|-------------------------------|
| 1999 | France | Erika shipwreck and oil spill |
| 1996 | Coast of Wales | Sea Empress |
| 1993 | Shetland | Braer |
| 1992 | Coroña | Aegean Sea |

Table 1
Major Disasters in Europe

Source: DG Environment, European Commission

6. A report from the European Environment Agency indicates that the number of weather and climate related disasters in Europe doubled during the 1990s. For more information, see EEA Signals 2004, EEA, May 2004.

7. It is estimated that half of the population of Southern Mediterranean countries will soon live in urban areas.

The vast majority of these disasters, apart from requiring huge relief and management efforts from the part of the affected state, also illustrate international co-operation at work, with most members of the EMP sending assistance (in terms of experts, financial, medical and material aid) to the partners. Table 2 shows that there is already a long-standing practice of relief assistance in case of natural disasters between the two sides of the Mediterranean.

Also worth mentioning is the fact that Euro-Mediterranean partners have established bilateral agreements amongst themselves for civil protection assistance. These types of agreements are more common between neighbouring countries and facilitate the rapid dispatching of help in case of natural and man-made disasters⁸.

III. Civil Protection in the Context of European Integration⁹

Background

Surprisingly, civil protection as an area for co-operation within the EU is relatively new despite the fact that the Treaty of Rome (1957) mentions the possibility of adoption by the Community of “measures in the field of energy, civil protection and tourism” (art. 3 (1), u)). But the fact is that subsequent revisions of the Treaty have added little substance to the possible focus and modalities for EU action on civil protection: the Treaties re-state the primary responsibility of Member States in this field and the largely co-ordinating role of the Union.

The text of the Draft European Constitution makes significant progress. For the first time an article on civil protection is introduced (Article III-184). The European Constitution states that the Union “shall encourage co-operation between Member States in order to improve the effectiveness of systems for preventing and protecting against natural or man-made disasters within the Union”. However, in substance, there is no radical change. The stress is again placed on the complementary role of the Union *vis-à-vis* the Member States’ own efforts.

In practical terms, and despite the lack of a clear legal basis, there has been an attempt to move beyond the mere co-ordination of national initiatives and to develop common instruments for more active co-operation since the 1980s. In May 1985, a first ministerial meeting held in Rome laid the foundations for Community co-operation in the field of civil protection. Between 1985 and 1994 various resolutions were adopted and their implementation resulted in the creation of several operational instruments covering both the preparedness of those involved in civil protection and responses in the event of a disaster.

In December 1997 a Council Decision led to the adoption of the first Community Action Programme for civil protection. The Programme mentioned the pooling of expertise and mutual assistance as the basis of any Community action in this area¹⁰. A five-year Action Programme (2000-2004) followed a first two-year Action Programme (1998-1999).

The programme laid out the objectives of the EU in the field of civil protection and those objectives are, to a large extent, still valid today. These include (1) supporting efforts at the national, regional and local levels with regard to disaster prevention and intervention in the event of disasters; (2) contributing to informing the public to increase levels of self-protection among European citizens; (3) establishing a framework for effective and rapid cooperation between national civil protection services when mutual assistance is needed; and (4) enhancing the coherence of actions undertaken at international level in the field of civil protection especially in the context of cooperation with the candidate Central and Eastern European countries in view of enlargement and with the partners in the Mediterranean region.

The Action Programme already contained the idea of establishing a Community Mechanism to facilitate the co-ordination of assistance by EU member states to a country affected by a disaster. However, it took some years for the plan to materialise as a concrete proposal and it is worth noting that the actual Commission proposal was

The Creation of the Community Mechanism for Civil Protection

tabled for discussion in September 2000, in the aftermath of the earthquake in Turkey in August 1999. The lesson learned from the Turkish case was that disasters of such magnitude required effective centralised co-ordination of the various national rescue and intervention teams.

It was the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States (interestingly, another event outside the EU) that accelerated the adoption by the EU Council of Ministers, on 23 October 2001, of the decision establishing a Community mechanism to facilitate reinforced co-operation in civil protection assistance interventions¹¹. Even if the response to natural disasters is still the main focus of the decision, the timing shows a growing concern with terrorism and the capacity of individual EU member States to deal with the different types of consequences of terrorist attacks.

The objective of the Mechanism is the rapid mobilisation of the necessary operational resources from EU Member States when the resources of a country are not sufficient to deal with disasters that take place both inside and outside the European Union. Furthermore, the aim of the mechanism is to improve interventions in case of disasters throughout Europe by better co-ordinating means and strengthening communication and training capacities.

In practical terms, the Mechanism facilitates the mobilisation of intervention teams, experts and other means, through five key elements: the pre-identification of intervention resources available in the Member States at very short notice and that are prone to mobilisation; a Monitoring and Information Centre, available 24 hours a day and responsible for following unfolding events and providing information; the establishment of a training programme to improve response capability and the complementarity of intervention teams; the mobilisation of small assessment and co-ordination teams that could be dispatched to the ground; and the establishment of a common emergency communication system to ensure the permanent link between the civil protection administrations of the Member States and the relevant services of the Commission.

Apart from the Mechanism, the European Union created in 2002 a Solidarity Fund for the relief of natural and man-made disasters. This fund provides financial assistance to help people, regions and countries hit by major disasters to return to normal living conditions. It can also cover expenses incurred by the Member State for emergency operations, such as combating the disaster or the restoring of essential infrastructure¹².

The September 11, 2001 attacks also triggered a serious reflection on the suitability of existing civil protection instruments and co-operation mechanisms to deal with the consequences of terrorist attacks such as those that happened in the United States. This implied a clear shift, both at EU and Member States levels, from 'classical' civil protection tasks (i.e. the prevention, management and mitigation of natural disasters) to the management of consequences of terrorist attacks involving chemical, biological and radio-nuclear weapons. This new concern is evident in the report that the Commission prepared at the request of the Ghent European Council (October 2001), which outlines and describes a series of concrete measures that could be adopted in order to avoid attacks on sensitive sites, such as chemical factories and nuclear plants and suggested ways of co-ordinating the EU response to such attacks¹³. Rising concern over the ability of EU Member States to use and co-ordinate the whole range of instruments at their disposal to deal with the threat of terrorism was also reflected in the work of the Convention on the future of Europe, responsible for the drafting of the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe.

The European Constitution contains a "Solidarity Clause" (art. 42), which states that: "Member States shall act jointly in a spirit of solidarity if a Member State is the victim of a terrorist attack or of a natural or man-made disaster". This clause requires Member States to mobilise all instruments at their disposal (including military means) to protect "democratic institutions and the civilian populations from any terrorist attack. In short, this raises the 'solidarity bar' among EU Member States (mentioned as one of the Union's values in Article 2 of the Constitution). However, it leaves open the question of how that solidarity is to be organised. The recent tragic events in Spain have added

The Shift in Civil Protection Priorities

8. As an example, Portugal has bilateral agreements in the field of civil protection with Spain, Morocco, France, the Russian Federation, Tunisia and Romania.

9. Most information on this issue is contained in the site: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment>.

10. COM (1999) 400 final.

11. Council Decision 2001/792/EC (23 October 2001).

12. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – Reinforcing the Civil Protection Capacity of the European Union, COM (2004) 200 final (25 March 2004).

13. Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament - Civil protection - State of preventive alert against possible emergencies, COM (2001) 707 final (28 November 2001).

a renewed sense of emergency to this reflection and the reactions of EU leaders showed a concern with devising concrete and effective common tools.

The reinforcement of the Civil Protection Community Mechanism is currently being discussed. In a recent communication¹⁴, the Commission proposed the improvement of information contained in the Mechanism's databases to allow for faster deployment in case of emergency, as well as the creation of training courses to facilitate the co-operation between multinational teams and the allocation of more funds to support the EU response capacity. Member states are divided on how centralised the EU role in civil protection actions should be, but the consensus is that to fulfil the tasks the Union has set itself in the Constitution, existing mechanisms and instruments need to be improved.

One important aspect of the solidarity clause worth mentioning in the context of this paper is the fact that it is included not in the chapter on Justice and Home Affairs but it is actually part of the Union's external action. This means that the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) should include amongst its aims the reduction of terrorist threats through the promotion of stability by combating the so-called "root causes of terrorism", while Member States' military means for ESDP operations should also be available for disaster or terrorist attacks relief operations inside the Union's territory. The European Security Strategy adopted by the European Council in December 2003¹⁵ - which includes terrorism and failed States as some of Europe's key threats - reinforces this dual approach to EU external action.

In short, and given the evolution of the European debate, civil protection finds itself in a "grey zone" between internal and external security. It is difficult to know at this stage what this will mean in practice, but it is very likely that this duality will have an impact on relations between the Union and its neighbouring regions, namely the Mediterranean. The question for the EU is how inclusive this strengthened solidarity can be in real terms. In other words, will it mean that the Union will increasingly turn inwards to ensure the safety of its territory and populations or will the links with neighbours be used to increase security, both inside and outside its borders?

Before looking at the significance of the increased salience of civil protection in the EU agenda for Euro-Mediterranean relations, it is worth considering what has already been done in this field within the EMP framework.

IV. Co-operation in Practice: EMP and Civil Protection

Co-operation on civil protection within the framework of EMP was launched shortly after the EU presented and developed its first action programme in 1997. This fact shows that EU action on civil protection has not focused exclusively on co-operation within the Union's territory from the outset, but has had an external dimension, namely through the implementation of programmes with neighbouring countries.

The "Pilot project for the creation of a Euro-Mediterranean system of mitigation, prevention and management of natural and man-made disasters" (hereafter "EuroMed CP")¹⁶ resulted from a 1996 proposal by Egypt and Italy, subsequently approved by the Committee of Senior Officials for the follow-up of the Barcelona declaration. The rationale behind the Senior Official's decision to back the proposal was that Civil Protection was one of the areas for the development of Confidence Building Measures. At the same time, as a pilot project the primary goal was to identify whether the concept would work at all and if so to what extent.

Further, as described above, the two sides of the Mediterranean have to deal with the same type of natural disasters on a regular basis - earthquakes, flash floods and fires. The communality of threats is thus a sound basis for setting up co-operation instruments that, in time, could lead to a common system for the prevention and mitigation of natural and man-made disasters.

The objectives of the project were "the creation of a Euro-Mediterranean system for prevention, reduction and management of natural and man-made disasters. It aimed at contributing to political confidence within the Partnership by developing the exchange

14. *Op. cit.*

15. *A secure Europe in a better World, European Security Strategy* adopted by the European Council on 12 December 2003.

16. Details on the project partners, as well as on the various programmes and actions undertaken in the framework of the pilot project, can be found in the document "The Euro-Med Pilot Project: technical report 1", prepared by the project managers for the Steering Committee in January 2004.

of experience, co-operation and training between the European and Mediterranean civil protection authorities to cope with natural and man-made disasters which constitute a high risk in the region”¹⁷.

From the start there was an explicit linkage between the project and the political and security chapter of the Barcelona Process, since Civil Protection is a “civilian function” which may require the use of military means. By promoting active exchanges between institutions responsible for civil protection and through the facilitating of future multilateral operational actions, the project can be seen as a Confidence-Building Measure.

Indeed, the implementation of the pilot project took place during a difficult period for the Mediterranean region and international security in general (the stalemate in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, as well as various major natural disasters in 1999) and it is thus not irrelevant that it was and remains the sole Confidence-Building Measure. The external difficulties faced have shown that disaster management and civil protection are areas where EU Member States and Mediterranean Partners can co-operate effectively notwithstanding the differences and the tensions that may exist in other spheres of activity.

As a project aimed essentially at practical co-operation to face common challenges, actions carried out in the framework of EuroMed CP focused on five main types of natural and man-made risks and hazards: earthquakes, flash-floods, forest fires, urban risk management and maritime risk management. For each of these risks, there are four main types of actions which can be undertaken: training and information courses and seminars; exchange of experts, networking of Civil Protection Schools; and short term technical assistance.

It is not necessary to enter here into the details of the various programmes set up and implemented throughout the period of the pilot project. One should also bear in mind that the main objective of the pilot phase was to test the potential for co-operation, which was confirmed by the partners intention to undertake a follow-up programme.

The fact that civil protection was from such an early stage of the EMP selected as an area for co-operation allows us to draw some lessons on how it can develop in the future and on how its example may be useful for other areas.

First, through the various training courses and seminars and the exchange of experts, the programme allowed the networking among practitioners from all the participating countries. High-level meetings, bringing together the Heads of Civil Protection services, were also held to evaluate the results of the project. This is particularly relevant if we consider that all 27 EuroMed Partners took part in activities of the pilot project. Networking does not, *per se*, guarantee effective co-operation, but it does promote mutual knowledge on the civil protection institutions and the way their work is organised.

Second, the project was clearly based on a multilateral approach (much in line with the objectives of the EMP) and the majority of initiatives were the responsibility of more than one partner. This means that, besides the already existing bilateral co-operation arrangements, the Partnership offers a multilateral framework, which reinforces the image of a “common project”.

Third, due to its “cross-cutting” nature, civil protection has considerable ‘spillover’ potential and may lead to progress in areas that have seen little evolution. In this regard, one should mention the possibility stated in the Options Paper prepared by the Greek Presidency on dialogue and co-operation on ESDP of involving, gradually and on a case-by-case basis, the Mediterranean partners in civilian crisis management operations. Another recent example is the launching of the EuroMed police co-operation project, which involves several training courses organised by the European Police College (CEPOL)¹⁸.

Fourth, the practical nature of civil protection co-operation underlines the “pro-active” approach that was largely a feature of the Barcelona Declaration. In other words, such a project shows that the EMP does not have to be solely a dialogue, but that partnership can also mean running common projects to address common challenges.

17. Euro-Med Information Notes: Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and MEDA Regional Activities, European Commission, June 2002.

18. Agence Europe 8667, 17 March 2004, pg. 17.

V. Conclusions and Recommendations: Linking an Enhanced EU Civil Protection Co-operation With Mediterranean Dialogue

The positive response to the pilot project shows that there is a basis for fruitful co-operation within the framework of the Barcelona process if the subject of co-operation has practical results in areas of common interest. Moreover, civil protection is an area where integration in the EU context is bound to increase in the next few years. The Solidarity clause of the European Constitution, the development of new instruments at EU level to fight against terrorism and the fact that civil protection is becoming an “ESDP task” will have an impact on the Union’s external relations, namely with the Mediterranean. This is why initiatives in the field of civil protection co-operation should dissipate any fears that these recent developments are intended to deal with ‘threats’ from the South.

In light of the experience of Euro-Mediterranean partners (both bi- and multilaterally) in providing assistance to disaster relief operations and building upon the EuroMed CP project, certain measures could be taken into consideration as a possible way forward for Euro-Mediterranean civil protection co-operation.

The assessment of the pilot phase left some recommendations for the future direction of the project that would strengthen co-operation among partners. These include the reinforcement of technical assistance programmes and the setting up of more permanent structures for co-operation, such as a system for the early warning of extreme meteorological events.

To ensure that the practical nature of endeavours in this field is retained, joint Euro-Mediterranean exercises could be envisaged. The EU has already conducted several civil protection exercises simulating the response to various types of disasters, including also terrorist attacks. Civil protection services from Mediterranean partners could be invited to contribute to such exercises in the future. Another area where civil protection co-operation at EU level will certainly develop in the future is the training of experts to guarantee some degree of inter-operability between multinational teams. Such training courses could also be open to participants from Mediterranean partners.

The reinforcement of the Civil Protection Community Mechanism could be paralleled by an upgrade of co-operation with the Mediterranean partners. For example, the databases of available national resources to deal with natural and man-made disasters run by the Commission could be extended to include also the resources of Mediterranean Partners. Whenever a State requested the assistance of the Community Mechanism, the Commission could also call upon partners to assess the availability of their means. In time this would lead to the enlargement of the Mechanism structures to all Partnership members.

The analysis of international responses to major disasters in the Euro-Mediterranean region (Table 2) shows that in reality Northern and Southern partners sent aid and intervention teams to most of those disasters. Therefore, and in the long run, the possibility of disaster relief operations being carried out with a Euro-Mediterranean “label” should be considered when useful. As a first step, concrete areas of civil protection could be identified. Maritime safety should be one of those priority areas, calling for the development of disaster prevention mechanisms and mitigation of the results of environmental disasters, such as the spillage of hazardous materials. The setting up of coastal management structures with the involvement of civil protection authorities would be in line with the Barcelona objectives for sustainable development. For such initiatives, actions related with disaster prevention should be taken as a matter of priority.

Finally, a link must be made with other initiatives that directly or indirectly deal with civil protection issues. This applies to the ESDP dialogue in particular, which actually addresses all elements of EU foreign policy. Compatibility and complementary between projects of both the dialogue and the Partnership must be explored - albeit retaining the ‘civilian’ nature of the initiative and avoiding ‘over-securitisation’ of future endeavours.

Table 2
Selected List of Natural Disasters
in the Euro-Mediterranean Region

| Date | Type | Location | N° Dead | N° Injured | N° Homeless | International Help from EMP countries | Nature of help |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| 24 February 2004 | Earthquake ¹ | Morocco | 628 | 926 | More than 15,000 | Spain, Portugal, Algeria, EU Commission, Italy, Belgium, France. (Germany also offered help). | European Commission: 975,000 primary emergency decision to meet initial basic needs for medical assistance, drinking water, household utensils, hygiene products and shelter. |
| 26 December 2003 | Earthquake | Iran | 26,271 ² | 30,000 ³ | Up to 75,600 ⁴ | Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Slovakia, Slovenia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Poland, Turkey, United Kingdom, European Union, Spain, Sweden ⁵ . | Material for Humanitarian needs, emergency cash grant, medical equipment and medicine, etc. ⁶ |
| Summer 2003 (August-September) | Forest fires ⁷ | Portugal | 18 | | 100s | Italy, Germany, Morocco, Spain, Belgium. | Italy (2 Canadian airplanes); Germany (3 transport helicopters and 21 rescuers); Morocco (1 airplane C-130, 3 Turbotush airplanes); Spain (1 Canadair airplane); Belgium, (other assistance). |
| 21 May 2003 | Earthquake | Algeria | At least 2,266 ⁸ | 10,261 ⁹ | 15,000 ¹⁰ | Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, European Commission, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Morocco, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom. | Relief aid, humanitarian equipment, etc. ¹¹ |
| 1 May 2003 | Earthquake ¹² | Turkey | 177 | 520 | Around 1,500 | Greece, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Ireland. | Emergency cash grants, kinds and services |
| August 2002 | Floods ¹³ | Central Europe | | | | Ireland, France, United Kingdom. | |
| August 1999 | Earthquake ¹⁴ | Turkey | 20,000 | 44,000 | | Denmark, United Kingdom, Sweden. | |
| September 1999 | Earthquake | Greece | Around 143 ¹⁵ | | More than 70,000 ¹⁶ | EIB provided loans for reconstruction (up to 900 millions) ¹⁷ . ¹⁸ Turkey, Germany, Finland. | |

1. See Morocco-Earthquake OCHA Situation Report No.6, 5 March 2004.
2. Iran: Bam earthquake Revised Appeal No. 25/03 Operations Update No. 12, IFRC, 12 May 2004.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. See U.S. Agency for International Development, Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA), Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), Iran-Earthquake, Fact Sheet#1, Fiscal year (FY) 2004, December 28, 2003.
6. For more information see Iran Earthquake OCHA Situation Report No.7, December 29 2003.
7. EADRCC Situation Report No.8 (final) on the forest fires-Portugal, NATO, 19 August 2003 and Portugal - Forest Fires OCHA Situation Report No. 1, 8 Aug 2003.
8. USGS Earthquake Hazards Program: Earthquake Report: Northern Algeria.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. For an extensive list of donor countries and aid description, see http://www.reliefweb.int/fts/reports/pdf/OCHA_10_14_513.pdf.
12. Turkey: Earthquake in Bingol Province Appeal No. 09/2003 Operations Update No. 5, IFRC, 12 Mar 2004; Turkey Appeal No. 01.80/2003 Programme Update No. 2, IFRC, 29 Oct 2003.
13. Central Europe: Floods Appeal No. 25/2002 Final report, IFRC, 24 Oct 2003.
14. Turkey appeal No. 01.57/2001 situation report No. 4, IFRIC, 19 Oct 2001.
15. One year on, Greek quake victims still in tin huts by Dina Kyriakidou, Reuters, 6 Sept 2000.
16. Athens: one year on, earthquake effects linger, IFRC, 15 Sept 2000.
17. EUR 900 million EIB emergency facility to Greece for reconstruction of Earthquake damages in Athens, Press release: PM 1999/052, 20 Dec 1999.
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