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Subject: Draft Council conclusions on improving civil protection through lessons learnt  
- Adoption

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1. Following the Presidency workshop on improving civil protection through lessons learnt held in Copenhagen, Denmark, from 16 to 18 January 2012<sup>1</sup>, the Presidency drew up a set of draft Council conclusions on improving civil protection through lessons learnt.
2. These draft Council conclusions were examined by the Working Party on Civil Protection on 28 February and on 23 March 2012. At this meeting, the Working Party reached an agreement on the text as set out in the Annex.
3. On this basis, the Permanent Representatives Committee is asked to invite the Council to adopt the conclusions set out in the Annex as an "A" item on the agenda.

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<sup>1</sup> 5761/12.

**Draft Council conclusions on improving civil protection through lessons learnt**

1. **Having regard to the Council Decision of 8 November 2007** establishing a Community Civil Protection Mechanism (recast)<sup>2</sup>, and in particular Article 5(7) thereof, entrusting the Commission with the task of "setting up a programme of lessons learnt from the interventions conducted within the framework of the Mechanism and disseminating these lessons through the information system";
2. **Having regard to the Council Decision of 5 March 2007** establishing a Civil Protection Financial Instrument which is in force until 31 December 2013<sup>3</sup> and in particular Article 4(1)(i) thereof, providing for the "establishment of a programme of lessons learnt from interventions and exercises in the context of the Mechanism";
3. **Acknowledging** that the lessons learnt programme is a cornerstone in the Civil Protection Mechanism's role of facilitating reinforced cooperation in civil protection action to save lives and to protect the environment, property and cultural heritage, and that it is worth developing further at EU and national levels;
4. **Recognising** that making systematic, focused and coherent integration of past experience inside or outside the European Union part of EU civil protection cooperation would ensure more effective, efficient and coherent European disaster management and help ensure that the Mechanism remains a dynamic and relevant instrument in the future;
5. **Recognising** the importance of stakeholders' involvement in order to ensure effective implementation of the lessons learnt from European disaster response and acknowledging committed and joint ownership in this regard;

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<sup>2</sup> OJ L 314, 1.12.2007, p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> OJ L 71, 10.3.2007, p. 9.

6. **Stressing** the importance of regularly addressing the implementation of the Mechanism's lessons learnt programme at political level;
7. **Pointing out** that the existing lessons learnt programme could be further strengthened by developing practical and user-friendly methods and tools that can be applied throughout the process of gathering, analysing, disseminating and implementing lessons learnt and noting that lessons learnt from disasters are relevant knowledge for a wide range of stakeholders acting in all phases of the disaster management cycle;
8. **Encouraging** the Member States and the Commission to make appropriate use of EU financial programmes to implement the following proposals, without prejudice to the negotiations on the future financial framework;
9. **Reiterating** that responsibility for protecting citizens lies with the Member States, while the European Union's activities aim to support and complement their actions; and Union actions promote swift, effective operational cooperation within the Union between national civil protection services;

- 10. Recalling the Council Conclusions of 27 November 2008** calling for civil protection capabilities to be enhanced by a European mutual assistance system building on the civil protection modular approach<sup>4</sup>; **the Council Conclusions of 27 November 2008** on European disaster management training<sup>5</sup>; **the Council Conclusions of 30 November 2009** on a Community framework on disaster prevention within the EU<sup>6</sup>; **the Council Conclusions of 3 June 2010** on the use of the Community Civil Protection Mechanism in major events in the European Union<sup>7</sup>; **the Council Conclusions of 2 December 2010** on Host Nation Support<sup>8</sup>; **the Council Conclusions of 12 May 2011** on Integrated Flood Management within the European Union<sup>9</sup>, and **the Council Conclusions of 13 December 2011** on an integrated approach to more effective risk, emergency and crisis communication<sup>10</sup>;
- 11. Taking note** of “The Copenhagen framework on lessons learnt”<sup>11</sup>, a summary of the Presidency workshop on improving civil protection through lessons learnt held in Copenhagen, Denmark, from 16 to 18 January 2012,

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- 12. Calls upon** the Member States and the Commission, within the framework of the Mechanism, to take steps to develop a systematic approach to data and information collection and compilation from civil protection interventions and exercises, covering the entire disaster management cycle (prevention, preparedness and response activities), in order to provide a comprehensive and adequate basis for evaluation;

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<sup>4</sup> 15653/08, paragraph 15(e).

<sup>5</sup> 15520/08, paragraph 17.

<sup>6</sup> 15394/09, paragraph 30(i).

<sup>7</sup> 9837/10, paragraph 15(c).

<sup>8</sup> 15874/10, paragraph 14(c).

<sup>9</sup> 9241/11, paragraph 22(q).

<sup>10</sup> 17122/11, paragraphs 18(h) and 19(a).

<sup>11</sup> 5761/12.

**13. Calls upon** the Member States, within the framework of the Mechanism, to:

- (a) further identify and develop methods of analysing data and information from civil protection interventions and exercises, with the purpose of pinpointing best practice as well as areas for improvement, and suggest relevant follow-up action with attached responsibilities and time frames;
- (b) facilitate mutual contacts between civil protection actors and actively encourage the sharing of knowledge and lessons learnt among relevant stakeholders;
- (c) promote implementation of lessons learnt in order to ensure a solid and experience-based foundation for the development of activities within the disaster management cycle;
- (d) designate as appropriate a lessons learnt focal point in each Member State in accordance with the tasks to be described in the guidelines referred to in paragraph 14(a).

**14. Calls upon** the Commission, within the framework of the Mechanism, to:

- (a) develop practical guidelines, in close cooperation with the Member States, for methods, tools and responsibilities for the lessons learnt process, for use and practical implementation at national and European levels, taking into account, inter alia, the input presented in “The Copenhagen framework on lessons learnt”;
- (b) support Member States in the analysis of lessons learnt, by promoting dialogue and exchange of national practice, providing subject-matter expertise, and taking stock of thematic lessons learnt after several civil protection interventions and/or exercises;
- (c) prepare, together with Member States, an annual report on the lessons identified from civil protection interventions and exercises and consider recommendations for their implementation;

- (d) ensure the dissemination of all relevant lessons learnt reports to the Member States' lessons learnt focal points and civil protection authorities;
  - (e) together with the Member States, create and maintain an overview of the implementation status of lessons learnt;
  - (f) report regularly to Member States at all appropriate levels on the implementation of lessons learnt;
  - (g) ensure, in accordance with the applicable procedures, that the results of the lessons learnt programme feed into the setting up of funding priorities under, for example, the Civil Protection Financial Instrument and other existing or future EU financial programmes.
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