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from: General Secretariat
to: Coreper/Council
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Subject: Draft Council conclusions on multinational modules under the Union Civil
Protection Mechanism
- Adoption

1. In the light of the outcome of the Presidency's Workshop on Enhancing the European Disaster Response Capacity: Joint/Multinational Modules, held in Athens, Greece, on 21 and 22 January 2014, the Presidency drew up a set of draft Council conclusions.
2. These draft Council conclusions were examined by the Working Party on Civil Protection on 29 January and 21 February 2014. On 14 March the Working Party had a final exchange of views and an agreement was subsequently reached, through a written procedure, on 21 March.
3. On this basis, the Permanent Representatives Committee is asked to agree on the text set out in the Annex and to submit it to the Council for adoption at a forthcoming meeting.

Draft Council conclusions
on multinational modules under the Union Civil Protection Mechanism

1. **Having regard to** Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism¹ and particularly Article 9 thereof providing for the possible development of multinational modules;
2. **Recognising** the importance of prevention and preparedness in the disaster management cycle and the primary responsibility of Member States to protect people, the environment and property against disasters;
3. **Recognising** that a well-coordinated and rapid response to disasters is a key element of effective disaster management;
4. **Restating** that the growing number and severity of disasters may result in increased pressure on Member States' civil protection capacities and may call for enhanced response operations;
5. **Acknowledging** that appropriate cooperation between Member States is necessary for civil protection interventions as disasters can overwhelm national response capacities despite prevention efforts;
6. **Taking into account** the increasing number of Union Mechanism activations resulting in more frequent interventions both inside and outside the EU, as well as the extensive previous experience in the management and deployment of civil protection response capacities;
7. **Acknowledging** that a multinational module is a module composed of resources from two or more Member States, established on a voluntary basis, that meets the general requirements set out in Commission Decisions 2008/73/EC² and 2010/481/EU³;

¹ OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 924.

² OJ L 20, 24.1.2008, p. 23.

³ OJ L 236, 7.9.2010, p. 5.

8. **Recognising** that the creation of multinational modules may lead to increased synergies, and may therefore be a good option for Member States to strengthen response capacities under the Union Civil Protection Mechanism in a cost-effective way;
9. **Restating** the importance of a risk-based approach to capacity development, including for the creation of multinational modules;
10. **Recognising** that the deployment of multinational modules requires high levels of preparedness on the part of the offering Member States, which calls for a clear definition of the role of the modules and careful planning of operations;
11. **Taking into account** the lessons learned and experience gained during the development of multinational modules through the Preparatory Action on an EU rapid response capability⁴;
12. **Highlighting** the Council conclusions of 2 December 2010 on Host Nation Support⁵, 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 approach⁶ and the Council conclusions of 16 June 2008 on Reinforcing the Union's Disaster Response Capacity - towards an integrated approach to managing disasters⁷;
13. **Taking note** of the outcome of the Presidency workshop "Enhancing the European Disaster Response Capacity: Joint/Multinational Modules" held in Athens, Greece, on 21-22 January 2014;

⁴ Commission Decision C (2010) 1206 and Call for proposals OJ C 64, 16.3.2010, p. 8; Commission Decision C (2009) 3356 and Call for proposals OJ C 123, 3.6.2009, p. 13; Commission Decision C (2008) 1740 and Call for proposals OJ C 135, 3.6.2008, p. 4; Commission Communication COM (2008) 130 of 5 March 2008 on Reinforcing the Union's Disaster Response Capacity.

⁵ 15874/10.

⁶ 15653/08.

⁷ 10128/08.

The Council of the European Union

14. Calls on the Member States, in close consultation with the Commission, to consider where the contribution of multinational modules is appropriate under the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, in order to exploit their full potential in enhancing the European disaster response capacity;

15. Invites the Member States to:

- a) consider identifying possible types of multinational modules that could be created, based on a common needs assessment, a cost-effective approach and on their experience and expertise;
- b) review, where they consider it necessary, existing national arrangements or plans to facilitate coordination in the event of deployment of multinational modules;
- c) consider appropriate measures to limit the impact of issues that may hinder the effectiveness of multinational modules;
- d) take steps to address the issue of command and control of multinational modules in advance of operations in a clear way, given that a single lead is required;
- e) make use of existing tools within the Mechanism, such as guidelines for standard operating procedures to develop if necessary standard operating procedures for multinational modules;
- f) take steps towards a thorough evaluation of multinational modules;

16. Invites the Commission to:

- a) support Member States' efforts to identify capacities that may be appropriate for forming a multinational module by:
 - i. sharing information among Member States on the interoperability of modules or resources which have already been registered in the Common Emergency Communication and Information System (CECIS);
 - ii. disseminating knowledge on past operations where arrangements similar to those for multinational modules have been applied, along with any existing assessment of these operations and suggestions for improvement;
 - iii. facilitating the exchange of know-how on possible arrangements for setting up and managing multinational modules;
- b) consider whether modifications within the CECIS are necessary to address the specific features of multinational modules;

17. Invites the Member States and the Commission, while developing scenarios for disaster response planning, to take into consideration the possible use of multinational modules in the overall European disaster response;

18. Invites the Commission to include information on the progress made in the regular reports to the European Parliament and the Council provided for in Article 12(4) of Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism.