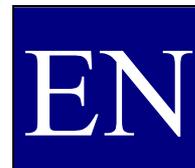




COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION



Council Conclusions on the establishment of an Early Warning System for tsunamis in the North East Atlantic and the Mediterranean region

*2838th JUSTICE and HOME AFFAIRS Council meeting
Brussels, 6 and 7 December 2007*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

1. RECALLING that the Councils' Action Plan for Tsunamis of 31 January 2005¹ invited the Commission to make proposals to reduce vulnerability to tsunamis, covering the establishment of a detection and early warning systems for the Mediterranean and the Atlantic,
2. RECALLING the wish expressed by the Council on 5 March 2007² that the Commission should submit proposals on early warning systems for the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean by July 2007,
3. RECALLING that Council Decision [...] of [...]³ establishing a Community Civil Protection Mechanism (recast) stated that the Mechanism consists, *inter alia*, of activities contributing to the establishment of detection and early warning systems for disasters which may affect the territory of the Member States, through studies and assessments on the need for and feasibility of those systems and through actions to promote their interlinkage and their linkage to the Monitoring and Information Centre (MIC) and to the Common Emergency

¹ Document 5788/05

² Document 6974/07 - (GAERC) 5 March 2005

³ OJ [...], [...07], p. [...] - Document 11163/1/07 REV 1

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Communication and Information System (CECIS),

4. RECALLING that the Council Conclusions of [...] on the development and establishment of Early Warning Systems in the EU⁴ lay down, in paragraph 7, general principles for the development of such systems,
5. NOTES WITH CONCERN that the North-East Atlantic and Mediterranean (NEAM) is the only region at risk of which the major part is not covered by integrated operational early warning system for tsunamis, despite the fact that major tsunamis can happen (and have occurred in the past) and extend their destructive forces over densely populated and highly industrialised coastlines in many Member States,
6. UNDERLINES that a tsunami in the NEAM region would certainly impact citizens from most EU Member States, due to what has been called “the globalization of risk” (e.g. nationals from one country moving to the coastline of other country to spend holidays or live permanently or EU citizens being affected by tsunamis generated far away),
7. STRESSES that it is the primary responsibility of Member States to provide information to national and non-national citizens in danger,
8. CONSIDERS, however, that all Member States must have an inherent interest in the establishment of a tsunami warning system for the NEAM region and therefore should be involved in this challenge,
9. NOTES that the lack of a warning system for coastal marine hazards, like tsunamis, is an important missing element in ensuring comprehensive multi-hazard coverage of natural disasters in the NEAM region,
10. WELCOMES the reflections so far engaged in by the Commission in the field of early warning systems for tsunamis, mainly as a result of an assessment process and inter-service consultation aimed to build proposals complementary to ongoing initiatives at international level,
11. NOTES with interest the outcomes of the seminar on Early Warning Systems co-organized by the Presidency and the Commission in Albufeira (PT) on 15-18 July 2007,
12. WELCOMES the initiative undertaken by UNESCO’s Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) for the North-East Atlantic, the Mediterranean and Connected Seas Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (NEAMTWS), the international mandated institution for the establishment of such a system in the NEAM region,
13. EMPHASISES, in order to avoid duplications, the importance of integrating forthcoming proposals into the ongoing IOC’s NEAMTWS initiative and other multi-hazard systems or approaches,
14. ENCOURAGES the Commission and the Member States to further explore possibilities to :
 - promote real time data sharing of seismic and sea-level information, including assessment of possible financial implications,
 - support ongoing initiatives (including those of UNESCO’s IOC) aimed at Member States’ installation of additional detection systems (e.g. buoys, sea level gauges),

⁴ Document 15473/07

- improve methodologies for tsunami modelling,
- seek forms of possible cooperation with existing centres both at national and international level.

15. ENCOURAGES the Commission and the Member States to consider synergies with the operational core services to be developed and made operational by the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security Marine Core Service,
 16. ENCOURAGES the Commission and the Member States to further explore possibilities for the enhancement of cooperation in this field with third countries, in particular from the Mediterranean basin, in order to strengthen sharing of essential data and to create an alert dissemination network amongst civil protection authorities,
 17. ENCOURAGES Member to propose practical multi-national projects to address the issue of common tsunami warning signals,
 18. INVITES the Commission and the Member States to organize command post and simulation exercises (including evacuation drills) with tsunami-based scenarios, in order to enhance preparedness,
 19. INVITES Member States to improve sustainable coastal management measures, such as building codes, land use planning and protective infrastructures,
 20. INVITES the Commission and Member States to contribute to the work-in-progress at UN level by supporting research and development projects in order to:
 - a) Identify tsunami hazards and risks;
 - b) Improve detection systems;
 - c) Develop tools to disseminate alerts to decision-makers and facilitate the timely informing of the population;
 - d) Enhancing the preparedness of the population and the response capacity of civil protection authorities,
 21. INVITES the Presidency and the Commission to continue the successful process begun by the Albufeira seminar, reconvening experts, analysing the state of the art and identifying avenues for further work in this field on a regular basis."
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