

# ***Basel Agreement (23 April 2007) Instigating the Network of European National Platforms and Focal Points for Natural Disaster Reduction***

## **The need for a regional network**

The increasing number and intensity of disasters caused by the impact of natural hazards calls for additional structures and instruments on disaster risk reduction. Regional networks and platforms have been considered of critical importance to ensure regional coordination and exchanges.

Europe is a hazard prone region as well as comprising a number of major international actors in disaster risk reduction (DRR), in humanitarian assistance and development aid. The European Commission and the Council of Europe are strong political regional structures, which could become major partners and decision-making structures for the implementation of DRR as part of development frameworks and strategies.

Regional activities and good practises in DRR are evident through e.g. the activities of European Commission's Solidarity Fund, the Flood Management Directive and the DIPECHO Programme. In accordance with the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), there is increasing integration of DRR into sustainable development programmes and tangible efforts of the Council of Europe through the EUR-OPA Major Hazard Agreement activities and specialized centres.

The International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR), the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) and more recently the HFA have established at the international level a global approach to DRR in its political, scientific and socio economic dimensions.

National platforms and focal points, as a nationally based backbone of the UN strategy for Disaster Reduction, provide the ideal structure to establish in Europe a regional network which would permit closer cooperation between countries as well as closer interaction with the ISDR movement.

A meeting held in Paris in December 2006, following previous German initiatives with the same objectives, has shown that there was a convergence of views among the participants to the meeting on the urgent need to proceed to initiate a European Network for DRR.

## **Common Goals**

- To facilitate and improve the exchange of information on good practices, the experiences and public policies of each of the members by establishing a more structured approach to issues and problems.
- To support the integration of DRR into all aspects of policy, decision making, private sector and civil society of the national, regional and international level of European countries with the aim to reduce the vulnerability of the society.
- To become a partner to the European Union, the Council of Europe and other relevant international organisations in all aspects related to DRR.
- To provide consolidated, substantive input to the Global Platform starting in June 2007.

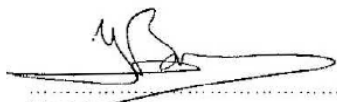
## Specific objectives

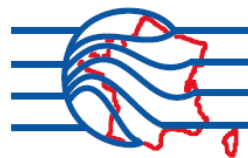
- To facilitate within Europe the contacts and relationship building between national platforms, focal points and experts by e.g. organizing periodical theme based meetings (to be defined case by case), identifying important upcoming topics, developments and political processes of DRR on the regional and international level.
- To formulate substantive proposals after discussions among members, to be submitted to the bodies or authorities of the European Union (EU), Council of Europe (CoE) a.o.
- To represent civil society vis a vis the EU, CoE.
- To provide a European Network for support of DRR efforts in developing countries and countries in transition.
- To support the development of additional National Platforms in Europe and in developing countries for example by twinnings.

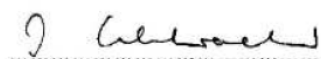
## Work Plan

Initial elements of the first phase of the network will be among others to:

- Develop a system of information exchange and channelling among the members of the network.
- Establish a system of information flow between UNISDR and the members of the network.

  
Yves Lebars  
Vice President AFPCN



  
Irmgard Schwaetzer  
Chair Person DKKV



  
Marco Ferrari  
Head of Working group International PLANAT  
Swiss agency for development and cooperation SDC



*Basel, 23.04.2007*