

**SOUTH EAST EUROPEAN COOPERATION PROCESS
MINISTERIAL AND EXPERTS MEETING
ON DISASTER AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

Antalya-Turkey, 13th May 2010

DECLARATION

We, Ministers and Heads of Delegations of the SEECP Participating States and the international organizations, meeting in Antalya at the invitation of Turkey as the Chair in Office of the South East European Cooperation Process;

AWARE that in South East Europe disasters have a regional dimension and all the countries share common risks and many similar challenges in the area of disasters;

REAFFIRMING the importance of the Ministerial and Experts Meetings of the SEECP's role in strengthening capacities of regional countries for disaster and emergency management and protection of populations in case of disasters having transboundary impact or affecting one single country;

ACKNOWLEDGING that disasters can cause severe damage threatening the safety, security and prosperity of the countries in the region and their citizens;

STRESSING the need for a more comprehensive approach in disaster risk reduction, tracking status of and protecting critical infrastructure, coordination and active participation of the competent national authorities in these processes;

REALIZING that regional cooperation in disaster and emergency management purposes will strengthen the bonds of friendship and understanding between peoples of the region and advance the state of science and technology and practices of all countries in disaster risk reduction;

EMPHASIZING that disaster risk reduction is the responsibility of the participating states and there is a need for regional cooperation to better achieve DRR in the region;

RECOGNIZING that good bilateral and regional cooperation in the field of disaster prevention, preparedness, response and recovery can save lives, protect social, economic and environmental assets and support the stability and prosperity to the region and their citizens;

FURTHER RECOGNIZING the crucial role of education, training and international exercises in the process of building capacities particularly for emergency response;

ACKNOWLEDGING the need to integrate scientific and technological data into policy making practices at all levels of disaster reduction and emergency management;

INVITING member states to share and to make available best practices, lesson learnt and relevant data on vulnerability vis-à-vis disasters;

ENCOURAGING the development of bilateral and multi-lateral cooperation including humanitarian, technical and financial assistance;

CALLING for the establishment of regional cooperation between governmental agencies, academic community and non-governmental organizations of SEE countries;

NOTING that recent trends, where applied, in disaster risk reduction in line with the “Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters” enhance on-going efforts in achieving DRR;

ENCOURAGING SEECP Participating States to take advantage of cooperating within all the existing mechanism from the regional, European and Euro-Atlantic levels as well as of using to the maximum extent possible from the financial opportunities offered by these instruments;

WELCOMING this meeting as a major opportunity to exchange information, views and experience with international partners and for developing a common approach to the disaster and emergency management and specifically disaster risk reduction challenges within the region;

HAVE AGREED TO:

ENCOURAGE national disaster and emergency management authorities in South East Europe to strengthen their capacities in community resilience and preparedness for disasters and their collaboration in the field of disaster and emergency management;

INVITE all partners from the international community involved in disaster risk reduction and emergency management to promote synergy and compatibility and to interact with DPPI SEE* thereby further enhancing regional cooperation and collaboration in this field;

ENHANCE the cooperation with European Union, NATO, UN and DPPI SEE*

UTILIZE similar exchanges in the future to sustain the existing high level dialogue,

DEVELOP policies to reduce suffering from hazards;

REAFFIRM their support for regional structures such as DPPI SEE* which can help to implement these commitments;

ENSURE that new initiatives seek synergies and avoid duplication with all existing structures, tools and programs;

EXPRESS their gratitude to the international community for its contribution to date and look forward to its continued support in the future; and

REQUEST the in-coming Chair in Office of the SEECP to convene a ministerial meeting on this subject in early 2011 to allow for an assessment of the progress in implementing foregoing commitments.

Adopted in Antalya on 13 May 2010

* Since FYROM has signed this MOU as “Republic of Macedonia” instead of the legal name agreed upon the framework of the UN (SC Resolutions 817/1993 and 845/1993) Greece cannot recognize this signature of this country which was accepted to the “Stability Pact” as FYROM