



## **DISASTER PREVENTION AND PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVE**

### **SEMI-ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT**

**Working Table III meeting, Prague  
15 November 2005**

The Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative (DPPI) was conceived as a regionally owned initiative that seeks to provide a framework for South Eastern Europe nations to develop programs and projects leading to strengthened capabilities to prevent and to respond to natural and man-made disasters and at the same time contributing to the development of a cohesive regional strategy for disaster preparedness and prevention. It fosters collaboration and coordination across borders and enjoys support from the international community. The DPPI is an active instrument in the overall Stability Pact objective of regional cooperation and enhanced regionalisation.

#### **Progress report**

In the period from the last RT and WTIII Meeting (May 2005), the following steps toward DPPI regionalization have been undertaken:

- the DPPI Executive Secretary has been selected and appointed;
- the location in the region for the DPPI Secretariat has been discussed and decided upon; collaboration with the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina on the issues of hosting the Secretariat has been successfully concluded and the DPPI Secretariat has been moved to Sarajevo; since September 1, 2005 the Secretariat has resumed its activities in its full capacity.

Political commitments from the countries from the region, both for the initiative and for the further regionalization of the initiative, have been solicited during Executive Secretary's tour through the capitals. Understanding of the topics presented, such as the future role of the DPPI, regionalisation and regional ownership, more active participation in the DPPI activities and identification of the regional projects with tangible and measurable outcomes, has been expressed and political support has been declared, confirming the necessity to define and articulate the status of the DPPI Secretariat.

During reporting period, the DPPI **major donors** met several times discussing mainly organizational, administrative and budgetary issues.

Finally, the second **Regional DPPI Meeting** in 2005 took place in Belgrade, SAM, from 20-21 October. The DPPI participating countries' delegations, the Advisory Board members and the donor countries' representatives discussed the topics of the future role of the DPPI, regionalisation and regional ownership, reviewed past activities and agreed on the way forward.



### **Regional projects facilitation and implementation**

**Disaster Management Training Program** continued to be implemented in accordance with the approved 2005 Work Plan through 9 training events organized during reporting period. In total, 162 persons participated, out of which 132 participants were from the SEE countries and the rest were from International Organisations and from all over the world, thus promoting experience exchange and information sharing beyond the SEE region. As a result of the **Regional Disaster Response TEAM** course, 45 trained individuals are placed on the regional roster, ready to perform post-disaster assessments anywhere in the region. The **Regional Disaster Management Course** resulted in the increased interest from the participating SEE countries and Slovenia, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Moldova and Croatia are exploring the possibilities to organize trainings addressing same topics but on national level. The **Train of the Trainers** workshops have been organized in BiH, SAM and Macedonia and the results should be seen within the next 12 months, during which period the participants are due to develop, organize and deliver training(s), as the mutual activity and responsibility of the participants and their supervisors.

The **Flood Management Course** was organized as a first phase of the **Establishment of Emergency Response Units in case of floods in countries of the Sava-Danube Basin Project** (developed by Hungary), demonstrating and promoting the linkage between the Disaster Management Training Program and concrete projects developed on the basis of the prioritization of the mutual needs through regional cooperation and collaboration.

**Joint Fire-Fighting Unit (JFFU) project** entered its second phase, and as a result of the mutual engagement of the trilateral Working Group (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia and Montenegro), the Border Crossing Protocols/Procedures have been developed and agreed upon at the expert level. However, these protocols have yet to be signed and ratified by the Governments of the related countries.

As a part of the mutual efforts to move ahead with the **Seismological Project, Earthquake Monitoring in Support of Disaster Preparedness in SEE** the 4 young seismologists from Albania, Bulgaria, Macedonia and Romania have been supported to attend the International Training Course "Seismology and Seismic Hazard Assessment" organized by GFZ as a part of the educational and training program of the UNESCO in the field of geosciences and disaster mitigation. Future developments related to the implementation of this project will be closely monitored.

The implementation of the **Harmonization of seismic hazard and risk reduction in countries influenced by Vrancea earthquakes** has been successfully carried out by Moldova as a leader (supported with Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey), as reported by colleagues from Science for Peace Program of the NATO Public Diplomacy Division. The request for co-funding has been submitted to the DPPI and it has been further explained and shared with the donors, for discussion and decision.

### **Networking of the DPPI partners**

The broad cooperation and coordination with international agencies and other related initiatives, has been restored during reporting period. Information exchange has been re-established and mutual project implementation has been discussed with the NATO Science for Peace Program, Public Diplomacy Division, the Civil Military Emergency Preparedness Program, the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the United Nations Development Program and others. These activities contributed to the development and visibility of the DPPI.



### **Conclusions and Follow-up Actions**

Since last RT and WTIII Meeting (in May 2005) the DPPI has experienced many challenges and has been successfully stabilized. All activities previously planned have been fruitfully carried-out and some new regional project initiatives and ideas have emerged, demonstrating that the SP DPPI has contributed to the strengthening of the human capital in the Civil Protection/Disaster Management Agencies and has enhanced the disaster prevention and preparedness in the SEE countries, thus improving the stability of the region.

Complementary to regionalization efforts, the DPPI will maintain its program activities aimed to build-up the human capacity and capability of the Civil Protection/disaster Management Agencies on disaster preparedness, prevention and management. Additional efforts will be utilized on facilitation and coordination of the development, fund raising and implementation of the projects initiated by the countries from the SEE region resulting in establishment of joint response mechanisms, standard harmonization and regional legal and procedural agreements, through much closer cooperation with other international initiatives, organizations and agencies. Information dissemination, program promotion and public outreach will be introduced as new activity with a goal to raise general public knowledge and awareness of natural and man-made Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative in the South Eastern Europe.

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