



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR EUROPEAN CIVIL PROTECTION AND HUMANITARIAN AID  
OPERATIONS (ECHO)

The Director-General



Union pour la Méditerranée  
Union for the Mediterranean  
الإتحاد من أجل المتوسط



The Hashemite  
Kingdom of  
Jordan

**First meeting of Civil Protection Directors-General of the European Union Member States and participating States of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism and Member States of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)**

**AND**

**Fourth Meeting of Civil Protection Directors-General of the Member States  
of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)**

**18-19 October 2023**

*Hotel Barceló, Valencia (Spain)*

**Euro-Mediterranean Civil Protection: Towards agile, resilient and mutual governance**

## **Rationale**

The summer of 2023 has been one of compounding extremes. Severe summer storms, floods, persistent drought, record-breaking heatwaves<sup>1</sup>, and wildfires have swept across national borders and throughout the Euro-Mediterranean region. Amid this devastation, examples of cross-border cooperation and mutual assistance, via multilateral mechanisms, have also emerged. Following immense flooding affecting two-thirds of the territory of Slovenia, critical assistance was provided through the activation of both the UCPM and NATO mechanisms. Meanwhile, the EU Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) was triggered across the Southern Euro-Mediterranean region in response to wildfires which spread across Greece, Italy, Cyprus, and Tunisia, to floods in Slovenia and Libya. At the same time, it should be emphasised that Greece and Cyprus received bilateral, regional ground and air assistance from Israel, Jordan, Egypt, and Lebanon during the raging forest fires that affected both countries. The terrible earthquakes in Turkey, Syria in February and Morocco last month have highlighted the range of risks to which we are exposed.

This current risk landscape, wherein diverse and complex scenarios converge, is compounded by climate change, which has been highlighted as a catalyst and amplifier of disasters. With the Mediterranean region warming 20% faster than the global average<sup>2</sup>, with far reaching impacts affecting the region's socio-economic fabric and ecosystems, the frequency, intensity, impact, and consequences of disasters can be expected to increase. It is conceivable therefore that current national and regional civil protection system response capacities will be overwhelmed.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://climate.copernicus.eu/july-2023-sees-multiple-global-temperature-records-broken>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.medecc.org/mececc-reports/climate-and-environmental-change-in-the-mediterranean-basin-current-situation-and-risks-for-the-future-1st-mediterranean-assessment-report/>



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It is thus important to consider the possibility to establish an operational framework for **regional cooperation**, inclusive of all Euro-Mediterranean countries. This will help concretize coordination and collaboration towards the strengthening and adaptation of civil protection systems for the management of complex disasters in a multi-sectoral, multi-risk and cross-border approach. Notably, this must leverage the value of the lessons learned and best practices of Southern Mediterranean states to inform effective prevention and preparedness. The summer of 2023 must remain a record-breaker rather than become a new baseline.

It is on this basis that the structuring elements of an effective and inclusive process of cooperation and assistance, which reinforces and is anchored to the programs of the UCPM and the UfM Regional Dialogue platform, must now enter a phase of operationalisation.

It is in this frame that this Fourth Meeting of the UfM Civil Protection Directors-General is organized. It aims to present the **2030 UfM Action Plan on Civil Protection**, which outlines five priorities and is based on the outcomes of the Working Groups and suggested activities anchored to the UCPM, PPRD Med, and the UfM Regional Dialogue Platform. This includes:

- Joint training and exercises;
- Inter-institutional cooperation and dialogue;
- Information exchange and early warning systems;
- Enhancing volunteerism;
- Resource sharing and pooling; mainstreaming common operating procedures.

The 2030 UfM Action Plan on Civil Protection seeks to ultimately contribute towards the development of a Mediterranean Framework on Civil Protection (MFCP) to operationalize the Regional Dialogue Platform's technical discussions into effective on the ground action, anchored in the management of complex disasters throughout the Euro-Mediterranean region. To ultimately **protect citizens, leaving no one behind**. It is proposed that you contribute to the reflection, validation and implementation of the 2030 UfM Action Plan on Civil Protection towards an effective cooperation framework.

### **Objectives and Content of the Fourth Meeting of the Civil Protection Directors-General of the UfM Member States**

This meeting will be held back-to-back with the 51<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Directors-General of the UCPM. Therefore, the morning of the 18<sup>th</sup> October will be dedicated to a **joint plenary session** of both UCPM and UfM Directors-General meetings, and the afternoon of the 18<sup>th</sup> and the morning of the 19<sup>th</sup> will gather the UfM Directors-General based on the objectives and agenda appearing below.

#### **The objectives are:**

1. To enter a new era of Euro-Mediterranean Civil Protection governance
2. To present the achievements and initiatives of the UfM Regional Dialogue Platform



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3. To engage in the development, validation and commit to the implementation of the 2030 UfM Action Plan on Civil Protection for an operational Mediterranean Framework on Civil Protection (MFCP)

### Questions for discussion

The prefiguration of a **Mediterranean Framework on Civil Protection** should strengthen, extend and complement existing agreements, without overlapping them in order to better integrate and share our resources across the Mediterranean basin. During this 4<sup>th</sup> UfM Civil Protection Directors-General Meeting, we intend to seek UfM Member States' views about the ideas exposed above, in general, and more concretely on the following questions:

- How can a regional cooperation and solidarity framework contribute to improve understanding and comprehension of emerging and changing risks, as well as strengthen resilience at the Euro-Mediterranean level, in a systemic approach, involving all the actors of society?
- Can the strengthening of regional governance, and science-based policies using new technologies, contribute to the development of an efficient Mediterranean cooperation?
- Can a sub-regional approach, based on proximity and the notion of shared risk pools, constitute a stage towards the construction of a regional framework for cooperation and solidarity?
- Are your national authorities prepared to seize the opportunity to integrate and use a digital platform in the national disaster risk management and reduction strategy, and do they see an added value in it?

### Working documents

In order to make the next steps of effective cooperation and solidarity in the Euro-Mediterranean area both operational and tangible, you are invited to reflect and comment on the two attached working documents:

- **2030 UfM Action Plan on Civil Protection**
- **Observatory of Volunteerism**



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## AGENDA

18

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### First meeting of Civil Protection Directors-General of the European Union Member States and participating States of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism and Member States of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)

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09:00-09:15

#### Welcome & opening remarks

- Director-General de Protección Civil y Emergencias, Spain, **Mr. Francisco Ruiz Boada**
- Union for the Mediterranean, **HE Nasser Kamel**, Secretary General of the UfM
- DG ECHO, **Mr. Maciej Popowski**, Director-General

09:15-10:15

#### Plenary session V

*With a focus on three main regional hazards, his joint morning session will showcase cooperation between countries in the Mediterranean regions, building on common best practices and lessons identified. The objective is to provide space for exchange to explore further cooperation potentials.*

#### Item 5 – Cross-cutting Euro-Mediterranean experiences calling for reinforced cross-border cooperation: wildfires, floods, and earthquakes (part I)

Item 5.1 – Wildfires

Chair: Portugal

- Greece
- Lebanon

10:15 – 10:45

Coffee break and family photo

10:45 – 12:45

**Item 5 – Cross-cutting Euro-Mediterranean experiences calling for reinforced cross-border cooperation: wildfires, floods and earthquakes (part II)**



#### Item 5.2 – Floods

##### Chair: Italy

- Algeria
- Czech Republic
- Jordan (TBC)

#### Item 5.3 – Earthquakes

##### Chair: Romania

- Palestine-Jordan
- Tunisia

12:45 – 13:00 Closing Remarks of the UCPM DGs meeting by the European Commission and the Spanish Presidency

13:00 – 14:30 Lunch and end of the Joint session

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### Fourth Meeting of Civil Protection Directors-General of the Member States of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)

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14:30 - 15:00 **Opening and welcome speeches**

- Co-Presidency – Jordan, **Brigadier General Mohammad Mahmoud Al-Omari**, *Director General*
- Co-Presidency – DG ECHO, **Ms. Hanna Jahns**, *Director for Disaster Preparedness and Prevention*
- Union for the Mediterranean, **HE Nasser Kamel**, *Secretary General of the UfM*

15:00 - 15:45 **Adoption of the meeting's agenda**

#### **Introduction to the regional dialogue platform in Civil Protection, Ambassador John Paul Grech, UfM**

*One year after its launch, this agenda point will present outcomes of the regional dialogue platform on civil protection aimed to bring together UfM Member States, international organisations and civil society organisations. The themes of the three working groups (prevention, preparedness and response) will be detailed for further discussion on future developments.*



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- Regional Dialogue Platform – Consolidation - Outcome of the 3 Working Groups (Prevention, Preparedness and Response), **Cne. Laurent Alfonso, UfM**
- Joint stakeholders' keynote, **M. Christos Dimopoulos (CERIDES) and Ms. Veronica Casartelli (CMCC)**

15:45 – 16 :15

**Coffee break and family picture**

16:15 – 16:40

**Civil protection on-site technical assistance and PPRD MED - Prevention, Preparedness and Response to natural and man-made disasters in EU Southern Neighbourhood countries.**

*The first results of these new initiatives, including the country visits carried this summer, will be presented. The session will also address interactions and synergies with the UfM Regional Dialogue Platform and the outcomes of the Steering Committee in Barcelona on Tuesday, 17 October.*

- A DG-ECHO flagship regional programme, **Tristan Simonart, DG ECHO**
- Outcomes of the country visits and Steering Committee, **Col Major Mohammed Ataknit, Philippe Geffroy (ISTC)**

16:40-16:50

**The potential behind the roles of cities and regions in Mediterranean civil protection – ARLEM (Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly)**

*As part of the regional dialogue platform, the ARLEM rapporteur will present in a short video the main outcomes of the annual report as a foundation for enhanced civil protection cooperation in the Mediterranean, offering recommendations on various levels of governance.*

16:50-17:20

**Open discussion and closing remarks**

- **HE Mr. Nasser Kamel**, Secretary General of the Union for Mediterranean
- **Brigadier General Mr. Mohammad Mahmoud Al Omari**, Director General of Jordan Civil Defence and UfM Co-Presidency
- **Ms. Hanna Jahns**, Director for Disaster Preparedness and Prevention, DG ECHO

18:15-20:00

Social event and transfer to the restaurant

21:00– 23.00

Official dinner – *Restaurant Veles e Vent*





October 2023

09:00 - 09:45 **Opening Speech** by John Paul Grech, Ambassador, Deputy Secretary-General, Social & Civil Affairs, UfM

*This agenda item will introduce (i) the project of a collaborative digital portal (interface and integration of work, tools, repository, etc.), (ii) the second EU-funded flagship of Multi-Country Risk Mapping, aimed at establishing a catalogue and risk analysis in the Euro-Mediterranean zone as well as (iii) the initiative of a regional observatory of volunteerism, aimed to promote citizen engagement in civil protection, in an approach of strengthening resilience.*

- **UfM Digital Platform**, Tristan Simonart, DG ECHO and Cne. Laurent Alfonso, UfM
- **Multi-Country Risk Mapping**, Giovanni Di Siervo, Italian Civil Protection and **On-Site Assistance**, Colonel Major Mohammed Ataknit
- **Observatory of Volunteerism**, Cne. Laurent Alfonso, UfM

09:45 - 10:30 **The 2030 UfM Action Plan on Civil Protection: Paving the way to a Mediterranean Framework on Civil Protection**

*Building on the different initiatives presented during the meeting, the 2030 UfM Action Plan on Civil Protection will be presented. Member States will be invited to reflect on the principles of working on a Mediterranean Framework on Civil Protection to strengthen Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in synergy with the UCPM.*

- **2030 UfM Action Plan on Civil Protection**
- Cooperation and Sharing of Scientific Knowledge in Anticipation, Preparation and Capability Response
- Framework for Regional Assistance and Solidarity
- Sub-regional approach

**Coffee break**

10:30 – 10:45 **Statements by Directors-General**

10:45 – 11:30 *Directors-General are invited to express their views on the way forward related to the presented initiatives towards the development of voluntary,*



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*non-binding **Mediterranean Framework on Civil Protection (MFCP)**,  
drawing on the work of the regional dialogue platform.*

#### **Closing remarks and conclusions**

11:30 – 12:00

- UfM Co-Presidency
- DG ECHO
- Union for the Mediterranean