



Network of Associations of Local
Authorities of South-East Europe
-NALAS



National Association of
Municipalities in the Republic
of Bulgaria



MUNICIPALITY
OF PLOVDIV
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Plovdiv Declaration on Disaster Risk Management

Plovdiv, 18 May 2015

We, Mayors and elected representatives of the local authorities of South-East Europe, present at the Annual Forum of Local Authorities in SEE in Plovdiv, Bulgaria on 17-18 May 2015, have agreed upon the following Declaration:

Considering that the South-East Europe region is increasingly threatened by various types of adverse natural events (floods, droughts, temperature extremes, earthquakes, landslides, storms, etc.), hazardous incidents and other emergencies,

Convinced that this situation calls for an urgent and adequate response of all responsible national and local actors,

Noting that disaster risk management is a sustainable development strategy and it is an ongoing process to reduce the existing risk, avoid the creation of new risk, and respond more efficiently to disasters,

Having in mind the substantial (national and local) government role and obligations to provide support and assistance when citizen's property and health are threatened,

Recognizing the outcome of the Sendai Framework for Action 2015-2030, which is the substantial reduction of disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods and health and in the economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets of persons, businesses, communities and countries.

Expressing our condolences and solidarity to the people of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia and Romania for the dozens of casualties and destruction of social and economic assets caused by the recent floods.



We, Mayors and elected representatives of the local and governments of South-East Europe, members of NALAS:

1. **Being aware** that natural and man-made disasters have a major impact on the well-being and security of citizens as well on the economy in the region of SEE,
2. **Acknowledging** the necessity to re-estimate and develop the implemented disaster risk management policies at all territorial and sectoral levels, in order to progress towards sustainable, social and economic development and smart growth,
3. **Emphasizing** on the permanent efforts of the local governments in the transformation of the legal and institutional frameworks with the aim of consolidating from response-oriented towards development-oriented approaches.

Encourage local elected officials and local governments to:

- **Recognize** disaster prevention policies as the most effective tool to achieve resilience through mitigation and preparedness that enable local governments and communities to overcome losses and damages, minimize their impact and proceed on with timely restoration,
- **Elaborate and adopt** after wide public consultations Local disaster risk reduction strategies in partnership with the central authorities and institutions in charge, to better define roles and responsibilities with regard to the risk reduction strategy,
- **Recognize** the importance of the regional and sub-regional inter-action and solidarity, as well as the support of NALAS network and their national associations that can be provided for the disaster risk management,
- **Express** clearly their human solidarity with municipalities and population affected by disasters by providing urgent and immediate help,
- **Acknowledge** and urge establishment of voluntary troops on local level as a helpful instrument for providing immediate assistance

Invite Central Governments of South East European countries to:

- **Support** local authorities in their appeal for re-assessment of national policies and legal framework for disaster preparedness and response, as well as establishment of strong structures with adequate capacities that are essential for improvement of planning and resilience of cities,
- **Assure** a legal framework which will lead to political commitment and effective implementation of roles and responsibilities of all actors involved in disaster risk management,
- **Enhance** governance for disaster risk management at local and regional level and across all sectors, building effective coordination mechanisms and sustainable partnerships between different public authorities and relevant stakeholders,
- **Improve** the system for restoration and assistance of the disaster affected municipalities, which guarantees provision of in-time support, without political favoritism,
- **Provide** the necessary resources human and financial to build capacities for local disaster risk management
- **Acknowledge** the key role that local authorities play in raising public awareness of risk and improve crisis communication (education, involvement of media, networks), as well as the development of a culture of risk management and disaster resilience,

Appeal to the European Commission:

- To enhance the exchange of European best practices of organizational structures, coordination and supplementation of local and national response to disasters;
- To largely announce and promote EU policies on disasters response, including establishment of an EU Civil Protection Force for rapid response (European Parliament Recommendation (2010/2096(INI)).

Urge parties and party leaders to:

Refrain from any interference and usage of disasters and human pain for political aims and propaganda

Appeal donors and international partners to:

- *Raise* and diversify the forms of timely support for the disaster risk reduction and reconstruction,
- *Promote* the use of innovative organizational and institutional know-how, technologies and instruments to support disaster risk management which lead to sustainable prevention and inclusive green growth,
- *Encourage* the work and contributions of Local Government Associations and NALAS network in comprehensively building resilient communities to enhance and strengthen their active and joint collaboration with local governments and national institutions.

We, Mayors and elected representatives of the local authorities, commit that our Local Government Associations will:

1. promote disaster risk management as a strategic tool for building local resilience
2. promote initiatives for re-assessment and improvement of national policies and legal frames regarding adequate and efficient preparedness and management of risks (prevention, response coordination, recovery);
3. mobilize support and assistance for affected municipalities through efficient and regular communication and coordination between municipalities (peer-to-peer-support);
4. strengthen cooperation with national institutions in charge of disaster risk management through meetings, joint conferences, actions and other initiatives.
5. gather the international support (financial, material, technical, expert) for affected areas through prompt and efficient communication and coordination with international actors.

and, where applicable:

- *enable* additional state support for affected municipalities through effective communication and coordination with key state institutions and synchronized actions with national level;
- *search* the dialogue with central government to create the necessary legal framework for risk management coordination;
- *support*, under the umbrella of NALAS, those unification processes in countries where needed

Sources:

Outcome of the European Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction; Towards A Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction; Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters; 08 July 2014, Milan, Italy.

Communication from the commission to the European Parliament, the council, the European economic and social Committee and the committee of the regions; The post 2015 Hyogo Framework for Action: Managing risks to achieve resilience; European Commission; Brussels, 8 April 2014.

Conclusions of the Council of the European Union under the Hellenic Presidency, adopted following the Communication from the European Commission on "The post 2015 Hyogo Framework for Action: Managing risks to achieve resilience".

Local and Regional Governments engaged towards a post - 2015 framework for Disaster Risk Reduction; United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG); <http://www.uclg.org/en/issues/disaster-risk-reduction>

Guidelines for Responding of Association of Local Authorities in Emergency Situations, NALAS, May 2015.

Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 March 18, 2015. http://www.wcdrr.org/uploads/Sendai_Framework_for_Disaster_Risk_Reduction_2015-2030.pdf



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