

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

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Heads of Disaster Management and Civil Protection of AU Member States meet on the Establishment of the Continental Mechanism of Civil Capacity for Disaster Preparedness and Response



Representatives from the civil protection and disaster risk management agencies in 36 African Member States met from 7-9 December 2022 in Algiers, Algeria. The participants deliberated on the establishment of the Continental Mechanism of Civil Capacity for Disaster Preparedness and Response (3CMDPR).

The event was officially opened by H.E. Brahim Merad, the Minister of Interior, Local Collectivities and Territory Planning. He underlined the fact that African countries have expertise in managing disasters and that trends show that there is an increasing need to harness synergies for disaster preparedness. “Algeria has recorded success in disaster response such as in air assistance, and management of maritime, land, biological and chemical disasters. The country has provided assistance in disasters in Mexico, India, the 2003 Sudan floods and the 2015 Nepal earthquake.” Further, he pointed to the fact that Algeria was in 2017 listed by the United Nations (UN) as an influential country internationally in disaster preparedness and response.

The minister welcomed the meeting as important in making concrete steps towards establishing the Mechanism, and the resulting sound recommendations towards its eventual establishment.



Speaking at the event, Mr. Gatkuoth Kai, Technical Coordinator for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) at the African Union Commission (AUC) hailed the potential of the Mechanism towards protecting the Continent from stresses and shocks. “With the great steps that have been started by the People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria, we as the

Continent now have the opportunity to consolidate our collective efforts towards achieving reduced loss from disasters”.

Guided by the AU legal counsel a bureau was set up to guide process of the establishment of the mechanism. The Bureau is chaired by the People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria, with the Republic of Kenya as the first Vice-Chair, the Republic of Congo as the second Vice-Chair, the representative of Southern Africa as the third Vice-Chair, and the Republic of Ghana acting as the rapporteur.

The participants deliberated on the scope and objectives as well as legal, structural and financial implications of the establishment of the Continental Civil Capacity of Disaster Preparedness and Response. They also adopted an action plan, a survey tool for the assessment of capacities and capabilities of AU Member States in Disaster Preparedness and Response at national level.

On the margins of the meeting, participants visited the Algerian Civil Protection Agency offices and took stock of the Agency’s technical capacity towards combating disasters.

A delegate from the Republic of Senegal detailed his thoughts on the visit; “Algeria has great capacity to address emergencies in-country and also out of country. We have witnessed the great resources in search and rescue, and also intervening in floods, forest fires. The human resource component is very impressive, given how much the staff undergo intense training. The national canine units are trained in-house. Algeria has also incorporated robotics and automation through Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning, and furthermore demonstrated international collaboration and cooperation with other countries in disaster preparedness”.

The meeting was organised in a hybrid format, and the Member States who participated included the following: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Cape Verde, Central Africa Republic, Chad, Congo, Cote d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Eswatini, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Equatorial Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, and Zambia.

The meeting was also attended by delegates from African Risk Capacity, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the International Federation of

the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), the Africa Science and Technology Advisory Group on Disaster Risk Reduction (AFSTAG DRR), the Africa Youth Advisory Board on DRR (AYAB DRR). The Association of African Journalists and Communicators working on DRR, Climate Change and Development (DIRAJ) and the League of Arab States (LAS).

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