



**PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE MEDITERRANEAN**  
**ASSEMBLEE PARLEMENTAIRE DE LA MEDITERRANEE**  
الجمعية البرلمانية للبحر الأبيض المتوسط

**2<sup>nd</sup> Standing Committee on Economic, Social and  
Environmental Cooperation**

Special Task Force on Environment and Climate Change

Rapporteur: Hon. Nikolaos Nikolopoulos (Greece)

**Natural disaster prevention and management  
in the Mediterranean marine space caused by oil or gas leakage**

*Resolution unanimously adopted on 29 October 2011, during the VI Plenary Session, Palermo*

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean,

*Taking into consideration:*

- a) the oil spill caused by the explosion of the Deepwater Horizon oil extraction platform in the Gulf of Mexico,
- b) the oil extraction platforms installed in the Mediterranean waters,
- c) the specific geophysical and geopolitical features of the Mediterranean,

*Noting:*

- d) the European Commission Communication “Facing the challenge of the safety of offshore oil and gas operations” (13 October 2010),
- e) the EU Council’s of Ministers on Energy Conclusions on the safety of offshore drilling activities (3 December 2010),
- f) the Council of Europe’s EUR-OPA Open Partial agreement, adopted by several South Mediterranean countries,

*Having regards to:*

- g) the Mechanism set up by the United Nations Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) and the specific role of Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC),
- h) the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR),
- i) the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation, adopted in 1990 as well as other relevant conventions adopted by the International Maritime Organization (IMO),
- j) the European Commission’s civil protection mechanism,
- k) the exchange of letters between the UN and the European Commission of December 2004 on Respective Roles in Crisis management,

- l)* the EU framework (N-N) and the European Maritime Safety Agency's (EMSA) activities,
- m)* the Euromed programme on Prevention, Preparedness and Response to natural and man-made disasters (PPRD framework), as well as the Euromed project on co-operation on maritime safety and prevention of pollution from ships (SAFEMED project),
- n)* the bilateral/regional cooperation framework (S-S),

- I. Takes note of existing civil protection mechanisms amongst PAM members belonging to the United Nations and the European Union,
- II. Takes note of existing bilateral and regional agreements on civil protection mechanisms in the southern Mediterranean,
- III. Takes note of the regional system established under the Barcelona Convention to which all Mediterranean Coastal States are Parties and in particular,
- IV. Urges Contracting Parties who has not yet done so to ratify the 2002 Protocol concerning Cooperation in preventing Pollution from Ships and, in case of Emergency, Combating the pollution of the Mediterranean sea, as well as the 1994 Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean sea against Pollution resulting from Exploration and Exploitation of the Continental Shelf and the Seabed and its Subsoil, as a first step towards a comprehensive regional approach to the risk posed by both shipping and offshore activities,
- V. Underlines the variety of preparedness levels to emergencies amongst PAM Members States,
- VI. Calls upon competent national authorities to provide briefings to their parliamentarians in the presence of national and international experts about current state of preparedness in all PAM countries,
- VII. Calls upon parliamentarians from the region to monitor the situation at national level as well as to participate to regional/international meetings on disaster management,
- VIII. Suggests that the parliaments of the region host regional seminars on the matter in order to exchange knowledge and best practices with all PAM States with the aim to debate about existing regional cooperation mechanisms and/or strengthen such mechanisms,
- IX. Urges parliamentary debates at national level on whether to allow the use of dispersants as a response option,
- X. Urges competent authorities to include risk mapping, risk prevention and risk reduction as part of their civil protection policies,
- XI. Regrets the lack of overall effective and efficient coordination mechanisms between national, regional and international actors on civil protection matters in the Mediterranean region as a whole, and calls for establishing and/or reinforcing existing collaboration in these matters,
- XII. Calls for enhanced consultations with UN bodies such as the Office of the United Nations for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) and the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC) so as to increase synergies of all expert bodies dealing with rapid response to disasters,

- XIII. Also calls on the offshore and shipping oil and gaz industries to cooperate activiely with Mediterranean countries in order to improve both national and regional levels of preparedness and response to such incidents,
- XIV. Stresses the importance of adequate training for the staff involved in disaster management,
- XV. Calls for simulation exercises including with foreign teams and/or regional/international bodies to be conducted on a regular basis,
- XVI. Calls for the upgrading of legislation, as appropriate, aiming at improving current situation, including requesting adequate resources (financial & personnel) for early warning and early response to disasters at national and regional level,
- XVII. Notes with concern the many existing differences among national license granting procedures regarding oil rig activities in the Mediterranean, and calls for a concerted regional approach in the matter including, in the long run, the establishment of a single system for the region,
- XVIII. Also calls for increased controls to detect vessels that illegally dump toxic, radioactive waste, and that illegally wash off their tanks in the sea,
- XIX. Decides to remain seized of the matter in the framework of its Special Task Force on Environment and Climate Change.