

COUNCIL OF EUROPE COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS
RESOLUTION (72)6

ON PRECAUTIONS AGAINST NATURAL AND OTHER DISASTERS

AND THE PLANNING AND PROVISION OF DISASTER RELIEF

(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 118 February 1972
at the 207th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)

The Committee of Ministers,

Considering that the aim of the Council of Europe is the achievement of greater unity between its Members;

Considering that the attainment of this aim implies that, in the event of a natural or other disaster occurring in the territory of one member State, the other member States shall lend it whatever assistance they can ;

Considering that, if action of this kind is to be effective at international level, it requires planning at national level;

Considering that such planning would also ensure greater protection for each member State's own population against the consequences of a natural or other disaster;

Considering that, by their scale and effects, such disasters demand immediate and effective action entailing prior co-ordination;

Considering also, that it is the responsibility of the public authorities to organise relief, even if private persons act in their name, and to see that systems are set up for precautions and protection against disasters;

Having regard to the findings of the preliminary study on this subject carried out in 1968-1969 by the Social Committee of the Council of Europe in collaboration with the International League of Red Cross Societies,

Decides:

d. To recommend that governments of member States bear in mind the following principles and suggestions when considering ways of improving the present situation:

I.

1. In order to be able to cope with disasters liable, at any time, to strike all or part of their population or territory, governments of member States which have not already done so should plan the action to be taken in such an eventuality, bearing in mind such factors as their political structure, the size and configuration of their - territory and the population density.

2. Depending on national conditions, planning might be carried out at national level only or at regional and local level as well. It is suggested that either a single detailed plan, sufficiently flexible to be adapted to any emergency situation, should be prepared or a number of different plans each for a specific type of disaster.

3. Such plans presuppose the setting up of bodies to direct and co-ordinate relief work, the establishment of an effective information system and the existence of financial means.

4. In order to ensure that relief plans are fully effective, in case of need, they should be regularly revised and tested.

5. It is desirable that the appropriate public authorities should associate specialised voluntary organisations closely with this work and try to develop a sense of social responsibility among the population.

6. It is important that any relief plan should be capable of being put into action immediately and that it should indicate the broad lines of the relief operations, designate the bodies required to take part in them and the authorities responsible for co-ordination, and clearly define their respective tasks, contain an inventory of available technical equipment and make provision for mobilising supplementary equipment.

7. It is also indispensable for relief plans to establish priorities in order to meet the various emergencies resulting from a disaster.

II.

I. Simultaneously with disaster relief planning, the governments of member States should

(a) encourage and materially promote research in various scientific sectors likely to provide the data necessary for preventive action;

(b) devise ways of applying the research findings.

2. Once particularly vulnerable areas have been identified, either disaster resistant buildings should be constructed or settlement of the population forbidden in areas considered dangerous.

3. Within the framework of preventive measures, particular attention should be given to the protection of the environment.

4. The public authorities should train competent relief personnel, promote health education and build up appropriate reserves of material and equipment, medicaments and food and take contingency measures to meet rapidly the increasing needs resulting from disasters so as to prevent delay in the distribution of relief supplies.

B. To invite the governments of member States to inform the Secretary General of the Council of Europe every four years of the action they have taken on this resolution.