

COUNCIL RESOLUTION**of 22 December 2003****on strengthening Community cooperation in the field of civil protection research**

(2004/C 8/02)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Whereas:

- (1) The strengthening of its scientific basis is one of the strategic objectives of the programme to improve cooperation in the European Union for preventing and limiting the consequences of chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear (CBRN) terrorist threats, adopted on 20 December 2002. Such strengthening would allow the analysis and assessment of CBRN-risks, vulnerability reduction and prevention, monitoring, warning and communication, and consequence management to be addressed efficiently.
- (2) In that connection, the Commission and the Member States were invited to make use of the Sixth Framework Programme of the European Community for research, technological development and demonstration activities, contributing to the creation of the European research area and to innovation (2002 to 2006) adopted by Decision No 1513/2002/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council⁽¹⁾ in order to increase cooperation in this area.
- (3) The appraisal and considerations which led to research being included among the strategic objectives of the CBRN programme are also relevant to any other natural or man-made risks.
- (4) The European countries have been struck in recent years by an unprecedented succession of natural disasters; in particular, the frequency and severity of adverse weather phenomena have shown a rising trend resulting in a wide range of disasters.
- (5) The constantly increasing technological development, the growing complexity of society in developed countries and the growing density of population are resulting in an increase in risks faced by the population, such as industrial risks, including the risks related to the processing and storage of dangerous substances and the risks related to the increased traffic, including the transport of dangerous substances. This evolution also generates an increase in daily accidents and adverse effects on the environment.
- (6) All necessary action should be taken in order to reduce those natural and technological risks, including research initiatives to gain greater insight into the causes of such risks, to improve methods for reducing their harmful effects and to increase the ability to forecast certain natural phenomena so that civil protection measures can duly be taken in advance.
- (7) Council Decision 2001/792/EC, Euratom of 23 October establishing a Community mechanism to facilitate reinforced cooperation in Civil Protection assistance interventions⁽²⁾, invites the Commission to stimulate and encourage the introduction and use for the purpose of the mechanism of new technologies, including systems for notification and alert, exchange of information, use of satellite technology and assistance to decision-making in the management of emergencies.
- (8) The strengthening of relations between those involved in civil protection and researchers remains crucially important,

CALLS ON THE COMMISSION AND MEMBER STATES TO:

1. promote the development of research projects on the reduction of natural and technological risks and on the mitigation of related accidents, developing the widest possible cooperation between the relevant actors;
2. to that end, encourage research institutes and other relevant entities to work towards common civil protection objectives aiming at improving protection from natural or technological risks for Europe's citizens, making use of the possibilities offered by the Sixth Framework Research Programme;
3. reinforce the actions in the field of research undertaken under Decision 2001/792/EC, Euratom;
4. foster links between researchers and those involved in civil protection.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 232, 29.8.2002, p. 1.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 297, 15.11.2001, p. 7.