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MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

Joint Meeting of the Scientific and Technical
Committee and the Socio-Economic Committee

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**RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING DECISIONS AND ACTIONS WHICH
SHOULD BE TAKEN AT THE PORT, AND AT NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVEL
FOR PREPAREDNESS FOR AND RESPONSE TO MARITIME RELATED ACCIDENTS
INVOLVING HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES IN MEDITERRANEAN PORT AREAS
AND THEIR APPROACHES**

*(To be submitted for adoption to the Ninth Ordinary Meeting of the
Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention)*

Proposal by the Secretariat

Introduction

The Meeting of the Focal Points of the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC) held in Malta, 4-6 October 1994, examined, amended and approved the draft Recommendations presented in this document. These draft Recommendations have been prepared by the Workshop on Preparedness and response to maritime related accidents involving hazardous substances in port areas and their approaches, organized by REMPEC jointly with UNEP IE/PAC in Barcelona, 19-28 March 1994.

These draft Recommendations are submitted to the Joint Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Committee and the Socio-Economic Committee prior to their transmission for adoption to the Ninth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties.

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1. The Mediterranean coastal States which are not party to the relevant IMO Conventions should take the necessary steps to become party to these Conventions. The competent national authorities of the Mediterranean coastal States should, on the basis of the IMO's conventions, codes, guides and recommendations take the necessary steps to issue the appropriate legal requirements and to ensure the adequate level of compliance with such legal provisions. Particular attention should be paid to the Recommendations on the Safe Transport, Handling and Storage of Dangerous Substances in Port areas, currently under revision. Once revised, the competent national authorities of the Mediterranean coastal States should, whether for the first time or as a revision, prepare the legal provisions with subsequent implementation and enforcement to ensure the safe transport, handling and storage of dangerous cargo in port areas.
2. Governments of the Mediterranean coastal States should ensure that national legal requirements concerning the transport and handling of dangerous cargoes are, to the greatest possible extent, compatible with the relevant codes and guides developed by IMO and other inter-governmental bodies responsible for different modes of transport. The governments of the Mediterranean coastal States should co-ordinate their work in the different organizations to avoid divergence with the established rules and regulations relating to the maritime transport of dangerous cargoes.
3. The competent national authorities of the Mediterranean coastal States, in the absence of any national regulations covering land transport and in view of IMO's IMDG Code's wide application, together with its provision which affect industries, storage, warehousing, handling and transport services from manufacturers to consumers, should, as an interim measure, consider accepting the recommendations laid down in the code as satisfying the minimum safety standards for the intermodal transport of dangerous goods.
4. The competent authorities of the Mediterranean coastal States should endeavour to establish Vessel Traffic Services in ports in accordance with the needs of each particular port and once it is decided that such a system, whether simple or highly sophisticated, is necessary, reference should be made by the responsible authority to IMO's Guidelines for Vessel Traffic Services (Res.A.578[14]) which provides guidance for designing and operating a VTS. They should further consider integrating such functions into a broader system covering other port functions.

5. The competent authorities of the Mediterranean coastal States should establish a system whereby the Port Authority is notified of the dangerous cargo on board a ship, prior to its arrival in the port or to its departure from the port. The advance notification should also include any deficiency of the ship, its equipment and/or the contents of the dangerous cargo which may affect the safety of port area or the ship itself.

6. The competent national authorities of the Mediterranean coastal States in charge of accidental marine pollution preparedness, response and mutual assistance should endeavour to ensure the participation of representatives of their country to the OPRC Working Group established within the framework of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) of IMO and to give written inputs to the Working Group's activities.

7. The governments of Mediterranean coastal States should ensure that the requirements under the OPRC Convention that ports under their jurisdiction have a port emergency plan co-ordinated with the national system for preparedness and response and approved in accordance with procedures established by the competent national authority are complied with. The governments of the Mediterranean coastal States should also require that the operators in charge of handling facilities within the port areas have a contingency plan compatible and fully co-ordinated with the port emergency plan. Locally, the port emergency plan should be co-ordinated with the municipal contingency plan and with the contingency plan established for fixed installations located in the vicinity of the port areas. The competent national authority of the Mediterranean coastal States in charge of accidental marine pollution preparedness, response and mutual assistance should ensure that the arrangements regarding co-operation and mutual assistance adopted within the framework of the Emergency Protocol to the Barcelona Convention are taken into account and properly reflected in the port emergency plan.

8. The governments of the Mediterranean coastal States should ensure that training programmes be organized for all categories of personnel whose activities are within the framework of a port contingency plan. Such programmes should include exercises. REMPEC should provide assistance in the organization of such programmes both at the regional and national level with priority being given to the countries with the greatest need.