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FOCUS ON PROMEDHE - Issue n°1

PROMEDHE Editorial

Dear Reader,

welcome to the first edition of the PROMEDHE newsletter. This bulletin provides information on the highlights and updates of the project, as well as on the activities in progress, events that have just taken place and the next appointments scheduled.

In this first issue we introduce you to the PROMEDHE project, starting from the kick-off meeting held in Brussels on January 2016, passing through the visit to the partner countries, leading to the first PROMEDHE workshop that took place in Rieti and Lucca last September. The workshop was an opportunity for the partner countries to meet again and lay the ground for the activities of the subsequent training course in Cyprus that successfully achieved its goals, also thanks to the preparation and the good relations established in Rieti e Lucca.

Then, the main news to be reported in this newsletter is the first PROMEDHE training course, the introductory course on the EU Civil Protection Mechanism held in Limassol, Cyprus, from 27 November to 1 December 2016. All the countries involved in the project took part in it, under the coordination of the Italian Civil Protection Department, as leader of PROMEDHE, and thanks to the logistic and organizational support of the Cyprus Civil Defence. Representatives from the Austrian, French and Spanish Civil Protection authorities joined the course as well, offering their precious contributions as virtuous countries with long experience in the field.

Last but not least, this newsletter introduces the upcoming events of the PROMEDHE project.

Don't miss it, keep updated and enjoy your reading!

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SUMMARY

PROMEDHE: initiation phase and subsequent steps.....	3
THE 1ST PROMEDHE INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP: Rieti-Lucca, 27-29 September 2016.....	3
LIMASSOL, CYPRUS: the 1ST PROMEDHE introductory course.....	4
PROMEDHE COURSE RECUP: the days spent in Cyprus.....	5
PREPARING FOR THE EXERCISE FIELD TRIP: table-top exercise.....	5
EXERCISE FIELD TRIP IN LARNACA.....	6
WHAT IS NEXT: Upcoming Activities and Events.....	7

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PROMEDHE initial phase

Exactly one year ago the PROMEDHE project started its activities with the objective of preparing national expert teams able to operate during emergencies in rapid need assessment and first actions for the safeguard of cultural heritage. The project is implemented by a consortium led by Italian Civil Protection Department (DPC), jointly with Cyprus Civil Defense (CCD), Palestinian Civil Defense (PCD), National Emergency Management Agency of Israel (NEMA), Jordan Civil Defence (JCD) and Fondazione Hallgarten Franchetti - Centro Studi Villa Montesca (VM).

Following the launch of PROMEDHE that took place on January 27 2016 at the headquarters of the Italian Civil Protection Department in Rome, the project activities were set up beginning with the collection and the analysis of good practices and lessons learned regarding the protection of cultural heritage in case of disaster. A preliminary questionnaire based on a survey was submitted to the partner countries, as well as Spain, France, Austria and Switzerland, in order to gather information over the existing national capacities for the safeguard of cultural heritage during disasters. The findings of the study were presented during the 2-day international workshop in Rieti and Lucca in September 2016. On 18-24 June 2016, the Italian Civil Protection Department project team, including Luigi D'Angelo, Head of the International Relations of DPC, Alessandro Candeloro, PROMEDHE Project Manager, Veronica Piacentini, cultural heritage protection officer, and Irene Zucconi, International Relation officer, visited Israel, Jordan and Palestine to officially present and discuss PROMEDHE objectives and activities.



These meetings involved officers of the national civil protection authorities of the partner countries and representatives of the administrations in charge of the national cultural heritage protection, as well as of other

relevant stakeholders (ministries, technical agencies, NGOs).

On this occasion, national inter-agency working groups were set-up. Likewise, state and regional priorities were discussed and project actions were proposed.

THE 1ST PROMEDHE INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP: Rieti-Lucca 27-29 September 2016

The PROMEDHE international workshop aimed at addressing the project objectives and the proposed actions on a strategic level, as well as identifying the required capacities. It was an important opportunity for all involved countries to highlight national civil protection priorities with respect to the Project and more in general to the sector, as well as to present the state of the art in their own territories.



Representatives of the key institutions working in the field of both civil protection and Cultural Heritage protection in Cyprus, Italy, Israel, Jordan, Palestine, Spain, France and Austria joined the meeting. The workshop programme included, on the first day, a visit to the areas hit by the recent Central Italy earthquake (Amatrice and Rieti), so as to illustrate the Italian civil protection system specifically with regard to the protection of cultural heritage during disasters affecting important cultural heritage assets. Participants had the opportunity to visit the DICOMAC, the national on-site emergency operations center, and to observe strategies and procedures related to the safeguard of the cultural heritage damaged by the earthquake. Professor Dolce, of the Italian Civil Protection Department, illustrated scientific and technical aspects of the earthquake of August 24 2016, in relation to damage and assessment of ordinary buildings, as well as of cultural heritage assets. David Fabi talked about the emergency

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management system set up in the area, while Veronica Piacentini thoroughly illustrated the emergency management activities implemented for the protection of cultural heritage.



On the second and the third day, the workshop was hosted in the beautiful scenario of Villa Bottini, in Lucca. Among the prestigious speakers who took the floor, we cannot forget to mention Mrs Aparna Tandoon, Project Manager of Collections Unit in ICCROM, who spoke about the state of the art concerning the protection of cultural heritage and involved communities during disasters from an international perspective; and Mrs. Veronique Dauge, head of cultural unit of the UNESCO office in Venice, who illustrated UNESCO initiatives to reduce the impact of disasters on cultural heritage in the Mediterranean and at global level. The European state of art concerning the protection of cultural heritage during disaster was illustrated, respectively, by Christoph Huetterer from the Federal Monuments Authority of Austria, Dominique Jager from the General Directorate for Civil Protection and Crisis Management of France, Maria Vara Moral from the General Directorate of Civil Protection and Emergencies of Spain, and Mikaela Mala from Cyprus Civil Defence. On the afternoon of 28 September, national and mixed working groups were set up and invited to reflect on the key aspects of the safeguard of cultural heritage in case of disaster, as well as on national priority actions for capacity development to be possibly implemented under PROMEDHE. The closing statement by Mr. Luigi D'Angelo, PROMEDHE Project Director, concluded the workshop.

LIMASSOL, CYPRUS: the 1st PROMEDHE introductory course



The first PROMEDHE training course on the "EU Civil Protection Mechanism and Post- Disaster Needs Assessment Techniques" was held in Limassol, Cyprus, from November 27 to December 1 2016, and involved the Civil Protection Authorities of all partner countries participating in the project (Cyprus, Italy, Israel, Jordan and Palestine). PROMEDHE foresees two training courses in its program, each of which comes in two editions for a total of four training events. The program of this first course is focused on the main concepts related to civil protection and disaster management in the light of organization and methods developed within the EU Civil Protection Mechanism; whereas the second course, scheduled for the next spring, will focus on cultural heritage-safeguard in case of disaster. 27 experts of different nationalities, specialised either on civil defence or CH protection, arrived in Limassol to join the training. Participants included 5 Cypriots, 2 Italians, 6 Israeli, 6 Jordanians, 5 Palestinian, one Spanish, one French and one Austrian.



Members of the national delegations belonged to different bodies dealing with both civil protection and cultural heritage protection, such as the Civil Protection Authorities, the Ministries of Tourism, the Tourist Polices, the Fire Brigades, the Ministries of Culture, National Archives and Museums. The reason for this combination of different skills and competences recalls the specific objectives of PROMEDHE, one of which is to increase coordination and cooperation of all national stake-holders who should be able to dialogue and work together in the interest of cultural heritage safeguard. The course was conducted by Wolfgang Krajic through frontal lessons and interactive sessions, including working group activities, task-based assignments and practical exercises.

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PROMEDHE COURSE RECUP: the days spent in Cyprus



The course started on the same day of arrival, on Sunday evening of November 27, with the welcome speech made by both PROMEDHE project manager and the Cyprus Civil Defence Spoke Person. Following the introduction of the main course topics ,participants were divided into four mixed working groups, so as to promote dialogue, collaboration and exchanges among experts with different background and working experience.

Theoretical sessions began on Monday morning, with two lectures about the EU Civil Protection Mechanism and its technical missions. After that, George Nicolaus, from Cyprus Civil Defense, Marina Ieronimidou, from the Cypriot Antiquities Department and Efi Parparinou, from the Cypriot National Archives, gave very interesting presentations respectively on the Cyprus Civil Defence System and the history of Cyprus cultural heritage sites and museums, the latter accompanied by site maps and an illustration of the existing procedures in case of emergency.



Protecting Mediterranean Cultural Heritage During Disasters

After a nice and relaxed lunch in the outdoor space of the hotel, thanks to the sunny weather which the group would have not been able to enjoy on the rest of the week, the afternoon session involved the participation of two representatives of the Cyprus Technical Assistance Support Team (TAST), who illustrated the functioning of assessment equipment, including advanced communication tools to ensure coordination of rescue operations. Veronica Casartelli, from the Italian Civil Protection Department, described the Italian Civil Protection System in light of the recent emergency still ongoing in Central Italy, after the earthquake of August 24 2016. Casartelli highlighted how Italy is naturally affected by all kinds of natural hazards, and has therefore developed a long experience in coping with the consequences of these phenomena.

PREPARING FOR THE EXERCISE FIELD TRIP: table-top exercise



On Wednesday morning, course participants made the first simulated assessment mission at the Archeological Museum of Limassol, which houses antiquities found during rescue excavations made by the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus and the foreign Archeological Missions. One of the participants, Demetra Aristotelou, an archaeologist who works in the museum, guided the group through the discovery of the building, the treasures hidden in it and the available arrangements and facilities for protecting them in case of emergency. Each working group was assigned a different task, such as preparing an evacuation plan for trapped visitors or antiquities at risk of theft in the aftermath of a disaster. The group members had to gather all required

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information to set out a plausible plan and, once back in the course room, they brainstormed and drafted an assessment report which was presented and discussed with the other groups in a plenary session. All working groups worked well and ended up with interesting findings, enhanced by the variety of the contributions that came from different professional backgrounds.



EXERCISE FIELD TRIP IN LARNACA

The heavy rain, more unique than rare in Cyprus, characterized the day of the exercise field in Larnaca. Despite this, all participants worked hard to make it successful. The heritage sites visited were four: The Church of Panagia (Our Lady) tis Aggeloktistis in Kiti ,the Mosque of Hala Sultan Tekke, the Larnaca medieval Castle and the Church of Agios Lazaros in Larnaca.



The participants were accompanied by Giorgios Georgiou from the Antiquities Department, who not only guided them in the tour visit, but also put himself at their total disposal in order to discuss the issues related



to the protection and the safeguard of cultural heritage in case of disaster. Each working group had a specific task to accomplish, which was related to the assessment of cultural heritage during emergency preparedness. Giorgios Georgiou discussed with the participants all the technical matters raised, and this activity concluded successfully the schedule of the training course.

On Thursday night, Loucas Hadjimichael, acting commander of Cyprus Civil Defence, opened the final dinner at Curium Palace Hotel and made the conclusive speech, greeting the participants for their commitment and the very good results achieved, and delivered them the certificates of attendance.



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Protecting Mediterranean Cultural Heritage During Disasters



WHAT IS NEXT: Upcoming Activities and Events

As stated above, the training course on the “EU Civil Protection Mechanism and Post Disaster Needs assessment Techniques” consists of two equivalent editions. PROMEDHE wants to give each partner country the opportunity to promote participation of as many experts as possible. The second edition will be held from 28 January to 3 February always in Limassol. We are currently working on its organization, and we will send you a brief summary on the event once the course is concluded.

However, this is not our only appointment for Spring 2017, which is indeed a season full of events, starting from PROMEDHE second training course focused on CH safeguard in case of disaster, held as usual in two editions. This courses is intended to be

an advanced training for participants who have already attended the introductory course. Experts will be trained on capacity assessment, first response and specific techniques for the safeguard of both movable and unmovable cultural heritage in case of disaster. Moreover, as per the PROMEDHE project schedule, the course sessions will be followed by Exchange of Experts missions, during which the mixed teams trained during the two PROMEDHE courses will work on specific subjects, together with other experts with different professional and cultural backgrounds. Subsequently, the project will organize technical assistance missions to support the development of the national assets/teams and related SOPs in the partner countries. More information on the next PROMEDHE newsletter!

PROMEDHE implementation has been assigned to the Consortium established by the Italian Civil Protection Department (DPC), as leader, jointly with Cyprus Civil Defence (CCD), National Emergency Management Agency of Israel (Nema), Jordan Civil Defence (JCD), Palestinian Civil Defence (PCD) and Hallgarten-Franchetti Centro Studi Villa Montesca foundation (VM). The general objective of PROMEDHE is to increase dialogue and exchanges over disaster management and reinforce collaboration among the national civil protection authorities of Italy, Cyprus, Israel, Jordan, Palestine and the Union Civil Protection Mechanism with an inter-disciplinary approach. To this purpose, the program aims at developing tools and assets to improve CH safeguard by creating national pools of experts able to work jointly at both national and regional level.

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