



Meeting Report

Mitigating the Impact of Natural Risks in Africa and Ninth UNESCO-IPRED Annual Session From 24th – 27th October 2017/ Cairo, Egypt.

A 4 day Partnership Meeting was attended with the aim to develop strategies to mitigate the impact of Natural Risks / Disasters in Africa, bridging the gap between African Scientists in the field of Natural Hazards and Policy Makers in the different African Union Member States. One of the strategies among others, for bridging the gap between the African Seismologist and Policy Makers is:

- Development of an implementable policy document that will portray the realities and seismic conditions of regions in Africa and to address Policy Makers on measures to be taken to mitigate the impacts of the Natural Risks when they occur, so as to enable the African Union Member States achieve Sustainable development goals through implementing proper DRR policies and measures.

The Opening Session

The meeting was addressed by The President of NRIAG – Prof. Hatem Odah, Advisor IDB – Dr. Hayat Sindi, Director UNESCO Cairo – Dr. Ghaith Fariz, where they gave their opening remarks.

On the other hand, the STRC in the Opening Session presented an opening speech that portrayed the aspirations of the AUC in responding to climate change and Natural Disasters , that it is time for Africa to join the global approach towards mitigating the impact of Natural Risks / Disasters and human induced disaster being that Africa bears the brunt of the impacts of Climate Change. It was also pointed out that, there is need to for more focus on the seismic conditions of the various regions in Africa considering, that Africa is surrounded by plates and the Seismicity of the Great Rift Valley in Eastern Africa calls for more attention for proper DRR measures.

Working Sessions

Several Presentations were made on Seismicity, Seismic Hazard among others. Session titles were:

Session 1: Seismicity and Seismic Hazard; coordinated by **Prof. Rashed Kebeasy**

Session 2: Seismic Risk and Engineering Seismology; coordinated by **Prof. Salah Mahmoud**

Session 3: Regional Update of Seismo-tectonic Map in Africa: A key component of Seismic Hazard and Risk Assessment; coordinated by **Prof. Abouelela Amin**

Session 4: Climate change and its impact on Africa; coordinated by **Prof. Farid Abu Hadid**

Session 5: Funding Opportunities for natural hazard projects and programmes; coordinated by **Prof. Hazem Mansour**

Panel Discussion on the meeting output and recommendation

The Panel Discussion deliberated on output of the First Conference on Mitigating the Impact of Natural Risks in Africa considering the sessions and presentations above mentioned and recommended the following;

- 1- **APPRECIATE** the contribution of UBESCO for the Willingness to find cluster for disaster risk reduction within the UNESCO cluster of science.
- 2- **WELCOMES** the establishing of Nile Basin Network for the environmental hazard including seismology for intra-Africa research.
- 3- **REQUEST** the STDF to support program on capacity building for seismologists to be hosted by Arab Republic of Egypt and co-organized by the AU-STRC to mobilize resources with the support of JICA and other partners.
- 4- **FURTHER REQUEST** to work on the modalities of setting up of a data bank- data station for the seismic data generated in Africa.
- 5- **URGE** the African Seismological Commission to be registered as a Non-Profit Organisation with its headquarters in one of the AU member state, the bureau to finalize modalities before Morocco meeting and call upon AU-STRC to support this initiative.
- 6- **FURTHER URGE** the African Seismological Commission statute to be developed by the expert to facilitate its registration.

- 7- **APPRECIATE** the role of the Arab Republic of Egypt for the hospitality accorded to the participants since arrival.
- 8- **FURTHER APPRECIATE** the role of the organizing Committee NRIAG- UNESCO- African seismological Commission and AU-STRC for the partnership and successful hosting.

The Formation of the African Seismological Commission

During the Panel Discussion / Deliberation session of the 1st Partners Meeting of Mitigating the Impacts of Natural Hazards in Africa and Ninth UNESCO-IPRED Annual Session, The issue regarding Data Security and Exchange among African Seismologists to be made virtual and be located in one of the African Institutions was raised. This led to the awareness on The African Seismological Commission that has been in existence and had its First (1st) Meeting in Egypt, 2016 and schedules to hold its second (2nd) meeting/Conference in Morocco in 2018.

It was reiterated that since the Seismotectonic Map of Africa has been developed, there is need to have a Data Centre that to be virtual.

After deliberations, suggestions were raised for the restructuring of the African Seismological Commission which are:

- For a better modelling of the ASC, exploration of The European Seismological Commission is necessary.
- It was emphasized that The African Seismological Commission has to be registered as an Entity with its secretariat in one of the African Union Member States and the STRC to support this initiative.
- The need was raised for The African Seismological Commission Statute to be developed by the Experts to facilitate its registration. The Drafting Committee to be made of
 - **Prof. Mustapha Meghraoui :** m.megrhraoui@unistar.fr
 - **Dr Atalay Ayele :** atalay.ayele@aau.edu.et
 - **Dr Vunganai Midzi:** vmidzi@geoscience.org.za
 - **Michelle Grobbelaer:** michelle@geoscience.org.za
 - **Dr Ahmed Hoshy:** ahhoshy2000@yahoo.com
 - **Along with the AU-STRC:** JohnsonM@africa-union.org

- Request was made for The AU-STRC to develop the TOR for hosting the Commission including the description of Activities
- The ASC was urged to send out Call before the meeting in Morocco requesting those countries willing to host ASC Secretariat to pronounce themselves .
- It was re-emphasized that The President of the ASC to ensure the registration of the African Seismological Commission
- It was suggested also that The General Assembly in Morocco to identify a host for the Commission

Side Event - 1

The African Union Scientific, Technical and Research Commission, had a working dinner with the Seismic Hazard, Risk, Exposure and Vulnerability Assessment working groups of the Project in Africa (seismic sub-group). This meeting was in order to discuss the way forward on how to structure the SEISMOSHAF project and to attract partners and donors to come on board.

After debate, the main recommendations of the meeting arrived are as follows:

1. Improve of the current SEISMOSHAF project proposal and possibilities to include SDGs, resilience, and development challenges to address policy and decision makers.
2. Develop a document (booklet) to bridge the gap and address policy makers taking into consideration areas of natural hazards, resilience, vulnerability and sustainable development.
3. Establish a mailing list of the working group.
4. Prepare a two (2) pages document by **Prof. Mustapha Meghraoui** with a drafting team composed of:
 - **Prof. Djillali Benouar**
 - **Dr. AtalayAyele**
 - **Prof. Fabio Romanelli**
5. Prepare and send a call to the other members of the working group, requesting their participation for the draft of the document mentioned at (2).
6. Mobilize resources for the project proposal through the following mechanisms:
 - investigate the possibilities to raise funding from their respective institutions
 - Networking fund under DEVCO (European Commission)

- Submit the proposal to the ACP for funding under the regional indicators programme; in this regards colleagues from Ethiopia to contact IGAD while the colleague from South Africa to contact SADC.
7. Develop an action plan and timeframe by the STRC to ensure the implementation of the findings.
 8. Launch a project on an AU Seismological Data Centre and develop criteria to be taken in consideration by member states.

N.B the document at 2 can be named as

Mitigating the Impacts of Natural Risks and Disasters in Africa and Redefining the Position of the STI through Harnessed Scientific Synergies Towards Sustainable Development in Africa.

Side Event – 2

A working Dinner was held at the request of the AU-STRC between the NRIAG, JICA and the AU-STRC. The meeting had a Verbal Official Request that upon the request of several African Union Member States, the NRIAG needs to re-organise its Capacity Building Program for African Seismologists and Seismic Engineer. In this regard, JICA was requested to assist in funding the capacity building program.

Output

The NRIAG accepted the proposal and the request of the AU-STRC and promised to avail its Laboratories and Instruments among others to develop the capacity of African Seismologists and Seismic Engineers which is considered, to be contribution in kind.

The Representative of JICA informed the AU-STRC and NRIAG that JICA is more interested in bilateral cooperation. The Representative of JIC promised to communicate with their office and also to find out the possibilities of JICA to participate in such programs but this cooperation may be considered to be funded from NRIAG.

Follow Up:

- STRC is to develop the Terms of Reference for the hosting of the ASC
- STRC to send out the report of the side event.
- Action to be taken by JICA

- AU-STRC and NRIAG to work on resource mobilization and the development of modules for the training.

The meeting was followed by a field trip to visit the historical site of the 1992 Cairo Earth Quake. The Meeting was closed by the President of NRIAG and vote of thanks was given to the participants.