



Government of Saint Lucia

Disaster Management Policy Framework for Saint Lucia

Document of the Saint Lucia National Emergency Management Plan

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SECTION 1: ACRONYMS

ADRA	The Adventist Relief Agency.
CARICOM	The Caribbean Community
Caritas	Caritas Internationalis. Catholic Organisations Relief.
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank.
CDERA	Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency
CDRU	CARICOM Disaster Relief Unit
CEHI	Caribbean Environmental Health Institute
CIDA	The Canadian International Development Agency
C&W	Cable and Wireless.
CMU	Hospitality Industry Crisis Management Unit
CMC	Hospitality Industry Crisis Management Committee
DANA	Damage and Needs Assessment
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DPRA	Disaster Preparedness and Response Act (Saint Lucia)
ECDG	Eastern Caribbean Donor Group
ECHO	European Community Humanitarian Office
EOC	Emergency Operations Centre
FAHUM	Humanitarian Allied Forces Exercise
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
GOSL	Government of Saint Lucia
GPS	Global Positioning System
HAZMAT	Hazardous Materials
H&W	Health and Welfare
HF	High Frequency
HP	Saint Lucia National Hurricane Plan
HTS	Helen Television System
IADB	Inter American Development Bank
ICS	Incident Command System
IEOC	International Emergency Operations Centre (for and in Saint Lucia)
LUCELEC	Saint Lucia Electricity Services LTD.
MSF	Médecins sans Frontières.
MOH	Ministry of Health.
NDO/NDMO	National Disaster Management Organisation
NDMP	Saint Lucia National Disaster Management Plan (1996)
NEMAC	National Emergency Management Advisory Committee
NEMO	National Emergency Management Office
NEOC	National Emergency Operations Centre
NHC	National Hurricane Centre (US)
NHMC	National Hazard Mitigation Council
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (US).
OCHA	UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
OFDA	US Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance
OPAC	Oil Pollution Action Committee

OSC	On Scene Commander
Oxfam	Oxfam International. Confederation of NGO's for Relief.
PAHO	The Pan American Health Organisation
PM	The Honourable Prime Minister of Saint Lucia.
PS	Permanent Secretary.
PEOC	Private Sector Emergency Operations Centre (in Saint Lucia).
RCI	Radio Caribbean International
REMPEITC	The Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Information and Training Centre Wider Caribbean. International Maritime Organisation.
RSL	Radio Saint Lucia
RSLPF	Royal Saint Lucia Police Force
RSS	Regional Security System
RSTS	Relief Supplies Tracking System
SITREP	Situation Reports
SLASPA	Saint Lucia Air and Sea Ports Authority
SLBGA	Saint Lucia Banana Growers Association
SLHTA	Saint Lucia Hotel and Tourism Association
SLTB	Saint Lucia Tourist Board
SLU-GIS	Government Information Services
SLUNEMP	Saint Lucia National Emergency Plan
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
Southcom	The United States Southern Command
SRU	Seismic Research Unit
SUMA	Supply Management (software)
UN	The United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UWI	University of the West Indies
WASCO	Water Supply Company (Saint Lucia)
WB	The World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme
WIBDECO	Windward Islands Banana Development and Exporting Company Ltd.

SECTION 2: DEFINITIONS

Disaster:	A serious disruption of the functioning of a society, causing widespread human, material, or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected society to cope using its own resources.
Capability Assessment:	An assessment which is used to determine an agency's ability to effectively deal with identified hazards and disaster management functions and to identify shortfalls in capability.
Disaster Management:	A collective term encompassing all aspects of planning for and responding to emergencies and disasters, including both pre and post event activities. It refers to the management of both the risk and consequences of an event.
Hazard:	Natural or man-made occurrences that pose a threat to people, property and the environment and are capable of causing a disaster. Hazards include earthquakes, fire, explosion, chemical spillage, flood, epidemics, hurricanes, landslide, storm surge, tidal wave or volcanic eruption
Mitigation:	Measures taken to reduce both the effect of the hazard itself and the vulnerable conditions to it in order to reduce the scale of a future disaster. Therefore mitigation activities can be focused on the hazard itself or the propensity of the elements exposed to the threat to be damaged.
Preparedness:	Measures taken to reduce to the minimum level possible, the loss of human life and damage to property, through the organizing of effective measures which will ensure timely and appropriate responses to a given hazard.
Prevention:	Measures taken for the purpose of preventing natural or man- caused phenomena from causing or giving rise to disasters or other emergency situations
Recovery:	The restoration of basic services and the beginning of the repair of physical, social and economic damages. Short term rehabilitation and longer-term reconstruction measures taken to achieve a rapid and durable recovery that does not reproduce the original vulnerable conditions.
Response:	Actions carried out immediately before, during and after a hazard impact, which are aimed at saving lives, reducing economic losses and alleviating suffering.
Risk:	A measure of the expected losses due to a hazard event of a particular magnitude occurring in a given area over a specific time period.
Vulnerability:	The extent to which a community, structure, service, or geographic area is likely to be damaged or disrupted by the impact of a particular hazard.

SECTION 3: BACKGROUND

Disaster Management, though called by numerous names over the years has manifested itself constantly in Saint Lucia. As far back as June 10 – 20, 1979 Saint Lucia was host to the Caribbean Disaster Preparedness Seminar, where over one hundred and fifty delegates from the Caribbean, North and Latin America assembled to discuss the concerns of the day. Of course it was the following year that Hurricane Allen blasted Saint Lucia.

The actual date for the creation of an office to deal with disasters is not clear, however by 1990 there was an established office being run by a National Disaster Coordinator.

A year later in 1991 Saint Lucia together with fifteen other Caribbean States signed the Articles that created the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency [CDERA]. Prior to that there had been the Pan Caribbean Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Project [PCDPP], which ran from 1980 to 1991 with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UNDRO, PAHO/WHO, Red Cross and other international agencies and had serviced the Caribbean including Saint Lucia.

In February 1995 the Office of Disaster Preparedness had its staff increase from two to three when the post of Deputy Disaster Coordinator was created. The next major step in Disaster Management for Saint Lucia occurred when in March 2000 the Office of Disaster Preparedness was renamed the National Emergency Management Office (NEMO) and the resident Disaster Coordinator and Deputy Disaster Coordinator became the Director and Deputy Director.

NEMO is responsible for having the Nation in a state of preparedness for an event, also for responding to the needs of the Nation after an event and coordinating this response at local, regional and international levels.

3.1 DISASTER CYCLE

The Disaster Cycle comprises the following elements:

BEFORE

- Prevention
- Mitigation
- Preparedness

DURING

- DISASTER OCCURS

AFTER

- Response
- Reconstruction / Recovery
- Rehabilitation / Rebuilding



3.2 COMPREHENSIVE DISASTER MANAGEMENT

It is understood by The Government of Saint Lucia that the disaster cycle lends itself to a comprehensive approach to disaster management, whether within this organization or at a National Level.

Comprehensive Disaster Management [CDM] was conceptualized by the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency [CDERA] as a new direction for disaster management for the 21st century. It moves away from the relief and response mode to a comprehensive approach which takes disaster and mitigation considerations into account during the planning and development stages. It also expands the partners to include economic, social, and environmental planners, architects, engineers, and health professionals among others. [*CDERA Press Release of Feb 27, 2004*]

With the main objective being to integrate Comprehensive Disaster Management into the development planning process it is The Government of Saint Lucia's intension to weave Comprehensive Disaster Management into the Corporate Life through the recommended Intermediate Results [IR]

GOAL Regional Economic Development enhanced through Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management			
PURPOSE <i>'To strengthen regional, national and community level capacity for mitigation, management, and coordinated response to natural and technological hazards, and the effects of climate change.'</i>			
↓	↓	↓	↓
OUTCOME 1:	OUTCOME 2:	OUTCOME 3:	OUTCOME 4:
Enhanced institutional support for CDM Program implementation at national and regional levels	An effective mechanism and programme for management of comprehensive disaster management knowledge has been established	Disaster Risk Management has been mainstreamed at national levels and incorporated into key sectors of national economies (including tourism, health, agriculture and nutrition)	Enhanced community resilience in CDERA states/territories to mitigate and respond to the adverse effects of climate change and disasters
↓	↓	↓	↓
OUTPUTS	OUTPUTS	OUTPUTS	OUTPUTS
<p>1.1 National Disaster Organizations are strengthened for supporting CDRM implementation and a CDRM program is developed for implementation at the national level</p> <p>1.2 CDERA CU is strengthened and restructured for effectively supporting the adoption of CDRM in member countries</p> <p>1.3 Governments of participating states/territories support CDM and have integrated CDM into national policies and strategies</p> <p>1.4 Donor programming integrates CDM into related environmental, climate change and disaster management programming in the region.</p> <p>1.5 Improved coordination at national and regional levels for disaster management</p> <p>1.6 System for CDM monitoring, evaluation and reporting being built</p>	<p>2.1 Establishment of a Regional Disaster Risk Reduction Network to include a Disaster Risk Reduction Centre and other centres of excellence for knowledge acquisition sharing and management in the region</p> <p>2.2 Infrastructure for fact-based policy and decision making is established /strengthened</p> <p>2.3 Improved understanding and local /community-based knowledge sharing on priority hazards</p> <p>2.4 Existing educational and training materials for Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management are standardized in the region.</p> <p>2.5 A Strategy and curriculum for building a culture of safety is established in the region</p>	<p>3.1 CDRM is recognized as the roadmap for building resilience and Decision-makers in the public and private sectors understand and take action on Disaster Risk Management</p> <p>3.2 Disaster Risk Management capacity enhanced for lead sector agencies, National and regional insurance entities, and financial institutions</p> <p>3.3 Hazard information and Disaster Risk Management is integrated into sectoral policies, laws, development planning and operations, and decision-making in tourism, health, agriculture and nutrition, planning and infrastructure</p> <p>3.4 Prevention, Mitigation, Preparedness, Response, recovery and Rehabilitation Procedures developed and Implemented in tourism, health, agriculture and nutrition, planning and infrastructure</p>	<p>4.1 Preparedness, response and mitigation capacity (technical and managerial) is enhanced among public, private and civil sector entities for local level management and response</p> <p>4.2 Improved coordination and collaboration between community disaster organizations and other research/data partners including climate change entities for undertaking comprehensive disaster risk management</p> <p>4.3 Communities more aware and knowledgeable on disaster management and related procedures including safer building techniques</p> <p>4.4 Standardized holistic and gender-sensitive community methodologies for natural and anthropogenic hazard identification and mapping, vulnerability and risk assessments, and recovery and rehabilitation procedures developed and applied in selected communities.</p> <p>4.5 Early Warning Systems for disaster risk reduction enhanced at the community and national levels</p>

4. SITUATION

Hazard analysis and experience have confirmed that Saint Lucia is at risk from numerous hazards, both natural and technological:

- Meteorological Hazard: Hurricanes, Tropical Wave, Tropical Storm, Storm Surge, Flooding, Landslides, Drought
- Seismic/Volcanic Hazard: Volcanic Eruption, Earthquake, Tsunami [Marine and Land based]
- Technological: Fire, Explosion, Hazardous Material Spill, Mass Poisoning, Pollution, Civil Unrest
- Other: Plague, Mass Causality, Epidemic Outbreak, Dam Failure

SECTION 4: INTRODUCTION

This Disaster Management Policy demonstrates Government's commitment to disaster management. Hazard analysis and experience have confirmed that Saint Lucia is at risk from numerous hazards, both natural and technological and that singly or in any combination they can cause extensive damage to life and property and adversely affect the economic condition of this island.

In light of this, the Government is committed to taking a pro-active, comprehensive and sustained approach to disaster management that encourages buy-in by all players and that is focused on risk and vulnerability reduction.

Disaster management is a shared responsibility between government, the private sector and civil society. The partnerships between Government and the Private Sector are a prerequisite in order for sustainable and effective disaster management to take place. Similarly cooperation between government agencies is equally important due to the crosscutting nature of disaster management. It is not the exclusive domain of any one sector.

The approach of fully integrating comprehensive disaster management into sustainable development planning, along with the diversity of actions and responsibilities required, is increasingly being incorporated into the policies, plans and projects of the Saint Lucian government as well as policies and practices of the private sector.

Several of the key elements to maintaining such a system are already in place with

- i. the establishment of the National Emergency Management Organization
- ii. the development of the National Integrated Development strategy,
- iii. the adoption of the Disaster Management Act No. 30 of 20006
- iv. the endorsement by the National Mitigation Council of the Hazard Mitigation Policy

- v. the endorsement by the National emergency Management Advisory Committee of the Hazard Mitigation Plan
- vi. the signing of a loan with the World Bank for the Saint Lucia component of the OECS Disaster Recovery Project

Confirms the government's commitment to mitigation and provides a framework for the administration and implementation of mitigation activities.

SECTION 5: VISION

In its Hazard Mitigation Policy [Document No. 0204 of the Saint Lucia National Emergency Management Plan] the Government of Saint Lucia envisages...

“A nation highly resilient to hazard impacts and adaptable to hazard risks.”

SECTION 6: PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

This document sets out the Government’s disaster management policy for Saint Lucia. It involves all government institutions, the private sector and civil society and other players, as well as all activities related to disaster management.

The goal of this policy is to reinforce the development potential of Saint Lucia by reducing risks from all hazards.

The fundamental purpose of the policy is to advance an approach to disaster management that focuses on reducing risks - the risk of loss of life, economic disruption and damage to the environment and property, especially to those sections of the population who are most vulnerable due to poverty and a general lack of resources.

The policy document aims to

- a. Inform governmental and non-governmental agencies of these objectives and what they need to do to achieve these objectives.
- b. Inform the public of the government’s disaster management objectives and how the government intends to achieve these objectives.

SECTION 7: OBJECTIVES

To establish necessary systems, structures, programmes, resources, capabilities and guiding principles for reducing disaster risks and preparing for and responding to disasters in order to:

1. Minimize human suffering from natural and man-made hazards
2. Reduce economic loss from hazard impacts
3. Protecting the integrity of the terrestrial and marine environments
4. To reduce loss and damage over the short and long term.

SECTION 8: PRIORITIES

1. Timely, coordinated and focused direction of resources towards the disaster management system’s effective operation.
2. Maintaining institutions that are technically capable of efficiently executing the comprehensive disaster management programme.

3. Developing local expertise capable of operating and maintaining the disaster management system.
4. Ensuring that the public is well informed and educated about disasters, their consequences and preventive and mitigation measures.
5. Creating an environment in which the private and non-government sectors contribute meaningfully to the comprehensive disaster management effort.

These priorities give rise to the following strategies:

1. The urgent integration of risk reduction strategies into development initiatives and all development planning.
2. The development and maintenance of a mitigation strategy to reduce the vulnerability of Saint Lucia to disasters.
3. The upkeep of the National Emergency Management Organization and National Emergency Operations Centre to:
 - a. Ensure that an effective disaster management strategy is established and implemented.
 - b. Coordinate disaster management at various levels of government.
 - c. Promote and assist the implementation and institutionalization of disaster management activities in all sectors of society.
 - d. Act as a repository and conduit of information pertaining to disaster management.
 - e. Ensure that the capacity for tracking, monitoring and disseminating information on phenomena and activities that trigger disaster events is established and maintained.
4. The introduction of a new disaster management funding system which:
 - a. Ensures that risk reduction measures are implemented.
 - b. Builds sufficient capacity to respond to disasters.
 - c. Provides for adequate post-disaster relief and recovery.
5. The implementation of the Disaster Preparedness and Response Act which:
 - a. Brings about a uniform approach to disaster management.
 - b. Addresses legislative shortcomings
6. The establishment of a framework to enable communities to be informed, alert and self-reliant and capable of supporting and cooperating with government in disaster prevention and mitigation
7. The establishment of a framework for coordinating and strengthening the current fragmented training and community awareness initiatives.

SECTION 9: SPECIFIC POLICY GUIDELINES

9.1 LEGISLATION

The Disaster Management Act No. 30 of 2006 clarifies and allocates responsibilities within government for disaster management and provides for more effective organization of the mitigation of, preparedness for, response to and recovery from emergencies and disasters in the Saint Lucia.

Government will provide the resources necessary to ensure compliance with the legislation and where appropriate to take steps to provide more detailed regulations in any subject area, which are consistent with the intentions of the Act.

9.2 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

Government recognizes that this policy will require a significantly improved capacity to track, monitor and disseminate information on phenomena and activities that trigger disaster events. This policy envisages a multi-agency effort led by the NEMO supported by the heads of all government agencies and representatives and the private and non-governmental sectors. It also implies an increased commitment to strategies to prevent disasters and mitigate their severity.

In short, the policy aims to:

1. Provide an enabling environment for disaster management.
2. Promote proactive comprehensive disaster management through risk reduction programmes.
3. Improve Saint Lucia's ability to manage emergencies or disasters and their consequences in a coordinated, efficient and effective manner.
4. Promote integrated and coordinated disaster management through partnerships between different stakeholders and through cooperative relations between all sectors of government.
5. Ensure that adequate financial arrangements are in place.
6. Outlining the general terms for sourcing external assistance in times of disaster.
7. Promote disaster management training and community awareness.

9.3 MITIGATION

The Hazard Mitigation Policy focuses on sustainable development and implies a commitment to a broader and more long-term development process. Emphasis will be placed on developing communities, building institutions and capabilities to reduce vulnerability, and expanded information bases, up to date scientific information, local knowledge and expertise as well as the involvement of all level of the society.

Resources will be provided on the basis of a mitigation strategy and programme, which identifies priority areas for investment and action.

9.4 PLANNING

This policy statement involves a shift away from a perception that disasters are rare occurrences managed by emergency rescue and support services. Government will provide the leadership, which will promote a shared awareness of the realization that all agencies, community organizations and individual households must come together to reduce risk and vulnerability.

Several time horizons will be used; these include a 10-year mitigation strategy, a five-year CDM Plan and annual work programme. In addition all national level contingency plans will be updated annually and updated at least once every five years.

The expertise of members of NEMO should be drawn on for the preparation and compilation of disaster management plans and strategies.

9.5 RESOURCE ALLOCATION

The implementation of this policy will require the management of human, material and financial resources to achieve the stated goals and objectives.

- a. Government is committed to ensuring that NEMO retains a full complement of staff at all times and to providing the wherewithal for the staff to function at a high level of proficiency. Since NEMO is to function as the node for communication, liaison and advice, it is expected that a significant portion of the budget will be allocated to acquire appropriate technical skills and expertise to staff the Department, as well as dedicated information technology, telecommunications and early warning systems.
- b. Financial resources will be allocated for disaster management from both the capital and recurrent budgets subject to the administrative procedures necessary to ensure the integrity of the budgetary allocation process.
- c. Government will take all necessary steps to ensure that the heads of public sector agencies receive necessary training and orientation to enable them to execute their disaster management related functions.
- d. Departments and organizations other than NEMO will be encouraged to dedicate some of their financial resources towards mitigation measures in general and preparedness and response in particular as part of their annual recurrent budget.
- e. Government will ensure that every department has in place a Continuity of Government Plan that will include addressing the securing of Government records.

There are currently no criteria for disaster prevention, mitigation or preparedness when assessing funding administered by the Government. This means that the government time and time again pays costs of recurring disasters. Little or no action is taken to reduce the risk of similar disasters in the future. There is little incentive for government agencies to spend money on effective risk reduction programmes and activities. There is no comprehensive monitoring and evaluation of mitigation and surveillance activities and there is little accountability for the

success or failure of funded prevention programmes. Government will explore creative ways to provide incentives for public and private sector entities to spend money on effective risk reduction programmes in preference to merely waiting to respond after a hazard impact.

9.5.1 FINANCIAL

Financial resource management will be guided by the principles shown below:

1. Encourage all levels of government or take measures to minimize the impact and reduce the likelihood of disasters. Where feasible, incentives should be provided for the taking of such measures.
2. Meet clearly stated objectives of any disaster management strategy or plan in a timely and efficient manner that is consistent with the financial policies of government
3. Encourage response to disasters at the most localized level of responsibility possible. Government should only provide additional funding when the capacity and resources have been exhausted or are absent.

Government will maintain The Emergency Disaster Fund to provide relief after the impact of a disaster.

Financial arrangements for disaster management will be put in place to allow for the release of funds in emergency situations from the Emergency Disaster Fund to defray expenditure that is provided for the current budget, and which cannot be postponed until the next budget. These funds will be used to provide immediate relief for affected people or for emergency services when necessary. The decision to release funds should be guided by established criteria and guidelines. To prevent the fund from being used for recurring or foreseeable disasters in the same areas, a post disaster review should automatically be conducted whenever funds are drawn from the fund.

9.5.2 MATERIAL

Disaster Management requires a wide range of tools, equipment and supplies many of which must be held in readiness until required in emergency situations. Government will ensure that there is an adequate stock of material resources available to mount an initial response to any emergency or disaster situation; the intention will be to provide such resources that would enable the saving of lives and to reduce suffering until external assistance arrives.

9.5.3 HUMAN

Government recognizes its responsibility to ensure that all persons engaged in disaster management activities have the necessary skills to execute their functions in an effective and timely manner. This means that training in disaster management must be multi agency, multi sector and multi level. It will also vary from the institutional to the informal. NEMO will be supported in its coordinating role to deliver and or obtain training in disaster management not

only for its own staff but also for the staff of other agencies and volunteers from the private sector and community based organizations.

9.6 WELBEING ASSISTANCE IN DISASTERS

Government's intention is to provide such immediate assistance as will minimize the suffering and material losses brought about by disasters. In particular, government will undertake to provide and maintain emergency shelters, relief supplies and material assistance to persons most directly affected by a disaster or emergency. In particular, assistance will be provided through the Disaster Emergency Fund to assist those persons who may have lost the capacity to earn income through direct losses sustained in a disaster. Any assistance provided will be executed consistent with all appropriate regulations and within the administrative framework established by the National Emergency Management Advisory Committee.

Specifically government will:

1. Ensure that persons rendered homeless by a disaster will be provided with temporary shelter with particular attention given to low-income groups, the elderly, the handicapped and other vulnerable groups.
2. Encourage the cooperation and consultation of the appropriate public, private and non-governmental entities in ensuring the provision of relief assistance.
3. Take action to support programmes that will expedite the rehabilitation of homeless victims of a disaster.
4. Make budgetary provision for the maintenance, stocking and outfitting of emergency shelters.
5. Maintain and retrofit emergency shelters in accordance with expert advice.
6. Enter into memoranda of understanding with the owners or suppliers of critical infrastructure necessary in an emergency.
7. Sustain the cost of returning any facility used to their pre-disaster state.

Government assistance in such circumstance should not be perceived as a replacement for insurance.

9.7 DISASTER RECOVERY

Recovery is a vital aspect of disaster management as the effects of disasters continue long after the immediate threats to life and property have diminished. The goal of the recovery effort will be to facilitate the recovery of affected individuals, districts, communities and the social and economic infrastructure as quickly as possible in an effective, efficient and sustainable manner. The following will be the primary strategies:

1. Identify and prioritize recovery activities
2. Promote effective coordinated actions among all agencies.
3. Promote timely decision making and implementation of decision
4. Eliminate duplication of effort and waste of resources
5. Provide appropriate accounting and reporting arrangements
6. Ensure dissemination of public information
7. Reduce vulnerability to hazards in the future
8. Maintain a culture of accountability in the use of disaster relief funds and materials.

9.8 ROLE OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Government will maintain a consultative and collaborative approach with the private sector based upon the initiatives shown below:

1. Capacity building options — public-private sector partnerships in the provision of emergency services; development of community support for disaster prevention and management; utilization of disaster management volunteer services to improve capacity and increase public awareness; provide an enabling environment for disaster management.
2. Incentives — provide duty free concessions of particular items to encourage disaster preparedness and mitigation efforts
3. Insurance — Government should explore insurance options for low-income individuals, communities and small-scale farmers.
4. Funding for training and community awareness programmes — funding should be provided to NEMO to undertake needs analysis and identifying priorities for training needs; conducting capability assessments, evaluating current disaster management training material, setting of standards, and for research and monitoring.
5. Private sector representation on all national level disaster management related committees or decision-making bodies.

9.9 ROLE OF THE NON-GOVERNMENT SECTOR

Comprehensive disaster management requires the active participation of community organizations and representatives of such organizations in disaster management activities. Government will support and maintain the necessary administrative arrangements to allow for the full participation of residents in DM activities through their organizations and representatives. Specifically, government will undertake to:

1. Support the disaster management related activities of the Saint Lucia Red Cross and all other service organizations.
2. Pay special attention to the development of community-capacity island wide.
3. Promoting a spirit of mutual support among residents throughout the nation.

9.10 WARNING SYSTEMS

Early warning systems are of critical importance in the implementation of an effective Disaster Management System. The Saint Lucia Meteorological Services has established an early warning system that comprises the following major components:

1. **Satellite Imagery Reception:** A GVAR Meteorological Satellite Receiving System is currently in operation at the Hewanorra Met Office. Images from the system are extremely important to weather forecasters in analyzing and diagnosing weather systems.
2. **Local Flood Warning System:** This system consists of fourteen Automatic Weather Stations (AWS) equipped with rain gauges deployed at strategic locations around the island. The AWS report via VHF radio to base computers at the two local Met Offices and alarms are triggered when certain thresholds in rainfall intensity are reached.
3. **Local Observational Network:** This network consists of two manned weather stations, the Local Flood Warning System (described above) and the HAM Radio Weather Network which comprises four AWS deployed to the north, south, east and west of the island.
4. **Communications Channels:** These channels provide the Met Service with alternate means of acquiring meteorological data and information as well as means for disseminating critical weather bulletins, warnings and advisories. The main communication channels are: Internet, Phone, Fax and HF Radio.

The Government of Saint Lucia will ensure that local capacity exists when and where necessary, to upgrade and maintain this Early Warning System. Specifically government must ensure that:

1. Meteorological equipment and systems are furnished with proper maintenance material and are kept upgraded to match technological advances.
2. Meteorological Officers are adequately trained and retrained to implement and maintain the Early warning System.
3. Mechanisms and systems exist to facilitate the dissemination of weather information to the populace.

9.11 RESPONSE MECHANISMS

Emergency response requires the coordinated actions of a variety of agencies representing the health, law enforcement, fire & rescue sectors. It is vital that these agencies be provided with the necessary equipment, training and supplies to enable them to execute their primary mandate of saving lives in emergency situations. In addition, they must work together in a coordinated fashion such that all efforts are directed towards the same end. Government will maintain its policy of providing critical resources for these agencies and support them in sourcing necessary broad based training for all key responders. Increasingly, agencies will be encouraged to regard

emergency resources as a single pool available to all agencies to provide the critical response required for any major incident.

9.12 EXERCISES AND DRILLS

Proficiency in any skill is honed and enhanced by practice. It is therefore necessary that all emergency response agencies continue to hone the skills of their staff through participation in regular drills and exercises. There will be at least one major full-scale emergency response exercise per year supported by tabletop exercises and drills all aimed at boosting or maintaining emergency response skills.

9.13 MUTUAL AID ASSISTANCE AND AGREEMENTS

Saint Lucia has a number of mutual assistance agreements in disaster management at the regional and international levels. Through NEMO, Government also has in place a number of Memoranda of Understanding with the private sector and other government agencies.

Further, government will continue its policy of preparing detailed memoranda of understanding with all private and nongovernmental agencies that can contribute significantly to the goal of risk and vulnerability reduction. Such agreements will include Memoranda of Understandings, which are aimed primarily at protecting the terrestrial or marine environments.

Saint Lucia will maintain its policy of providing assistance to any country which suffers the effects of a disaster. However, such assistance will be predicated upon the official identification of needs and the observance of the appropriate regional or international protocols.

SECTION 10: ADMINISTRATIVE CONTEXT

10.1 LOCAL CONTEXT

10.1.1 National Emergency Management Organisation

The NEMO Organization is coordinated by a team of Public Servants. The office of NEMO acts as a Secretariat for the majority of areas linked to Disaster Management.

Disaster Management in Saint Lucia is executed on a voluntary basis and during an event the National Emergency Management Organization [NEMO] as part of a large network comes into existence to respond to a disaster. There are various Ministries that are essential to a response action. There are also eighteen (18) District Committees that are composed similarly to the national committees, which are composed of representatives of various Ministries and Social Groups. For a response action the national personnel contacts his/her local counterpart and together execute an action.

During an event the NEMO Secretariat transforms into the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC). The NEOC is the center from which all commands are issued and to which all demands are made. It is the seat of control for the Prime Minister as Chairman of the NEOC and

as Leader of the State. All heads of essential services locate at the NEOC e.g. Commissioner of Police, Chief Fire Officer, Chief Medical Officer, etc.

NEMO's MISSION STATEMENT...

The role of the National Emergency Management Organisation [NEMO] is to develop, test and implement adequate measures to protect the population of Saint Lucia from the physical, social, environmental and economic effects of both natural and man-made disasters. Its responsibility is to ensure the efficient functioning of preparedness, prevention, mitigation and response actions.

HAZARDS

Severe weather systems are not the only threat that NEMO must plan and respond to; hazard analysis and experience have confirmed that Saint Lucia is at risk from numerous hazards, both natural and technological:

- Meteorological Hazard: Hurricanes, Tropical Wave, Tropical Storm, Storm Surge, Flooding, Landslides, Drought
- Seismic/Volcanic Hazard: Volcanic Eruption, Earthquake, Tsunami
- Technological: Fire, Explosion, Hazardous Material Spill, Mass Poisoning, Pollution, Civil Unrest
- Other: Plague, Mass Causality, Epidemic Outbreak, Dam Failure

10.1.2 National Emergency Management Advisory Committee [NEMAC]

Disaster Management Act No. 30 of 2006
PART III
National Emergency and Disaster Response Plan

11. - (1) The Director shall in consultation with the National Advisory Committee establish other committees and sub-committees charged with particular responsibilities, whether defined by geographical area or otherwise, in relation to the response to emergencies and disasters in Saint Lucia, which other committees and sub-committees shall be available to be convened whenever a threatened disaster alert arises or a disaster strikes.

10.1.3 National Hazard Mitigation Council [NHMC]

Terms of Reference

... the National Hazard Mitigation Council (NHMC) should be formed with the specific objectives as they relate to mapping:

- To coordinate government programs for vulnerability reduction.
- To foster scientific and engineering endeavors aimed at closing gaps in knowledge in order to reduce loss of life and property.
- To develop measures for the assessment, prediction, prevention and mitigation of natural disasters through programs of technical assistance and technology transfer, demonstration projects and education and training, tailored to specific hazards and locations and to evaluate the effectiveness of those programs.
- To prepare a National Mitigation Plan for Saint Lucia

10.2 REGIONAL CONTEXT

10.2.1 Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency [CDERA]

The Government of the Saint Lucia is a signatory to the Agreement Establishing the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA).

CDERA is an inter-governmental agency established in September 1991 by an Agreement of the Conference of Heads of Government of CARICOM to be responsible for disaster management. There are currently sixteen Participating States within CDERA's membership.

CDERA's main function is to make an immediate and coordinated response to any disastrous event affecting any Participating State, once the state requests such assistance.
[http://www.cdera.org/about_history.shtml]

10.2.2 Association of Caribbean States [ACS]

This agreement is still to be ratified.

The relevant Articles are included in the annex. However the primary objective of this Agreement is to develop a network of legally binding mechanisms that promote co-operation for prevention, mitigation and management of natural disasters, through the collaboration of the contracting parties among themselves and with organizations, which work in the field of natural disasters in the region.

The Convention Establishing the ACS was signed on 24 July 1994 in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, with the aim of promoting consultation, cooperation and concerted action among all the countries of the Caribbean, comprising 25 Member States and three Associate Members. Eight other non-independent Caribbean countries are eligible for associate membership.

Its current focus is on Trade, Transport, Sustainable Tourism and Natural Disasters.
[<http://www.acs-aec.org/about.htm>]

10.2.3 Pan American Health Organisation [PAHO]

The Disaster Management Program of the PAHO CPC Office seeks to improve the ability of the health sector to prepare, prevent, mitigate and respond to natural and man-made disasters. The program operates in collaboration with countries and regional institutions throughout the Caribbean including the English, Spanish, French and Dutch speaking countries. A major component of the program is training in various aspects of disaster management in order to ensure that each country has a cadre of adequately trained local personnel. [BVI Framework]

The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) is an international public health agency working to improve health and living standards of the people of the Americas. The Organization provides technical collaboration in a variety of specialized public health fields, and organizes emergency preparedness and disaster relief coordination.
[<http://www.paho.org/english/paho/What-PAHO.htm>]

10.2.4 Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance [OFDA]

OFDA/LAC is the regional office of the Office of the U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance responsible for the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. OFDA is the office within USAID responsible for facilitating and coordinating U.S. Government emergency assistance overseas. OFDA provides humanitarian assistance to save lives, alleviate human suffering, and reduce the social and economic impact of emergencies worldwide.
[<http://www.ofdalac.org/english/main.html>]

USAID/OFDA's training activities in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) commenced in 1989 with the Technical Assistance and Training Program (TATP). The TATP is a multi-course venture with instruction in disaster management concepts, training methodology, and technical disciplines, as well as the provision of technical assistance.
[<http://www.ofdalac.org/english/ayuda-tecnica.html>]

The enabling legislation and mandate are stipulated by the 1961 Foreign Assistance Act Sections 491-493.

10.3 INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

The following international trends in disaster management must be considered.

1. A considerable amount of both indigenous and scientific knowledge exists on natural and technological threats. There has been an increase in the literature on environmental and disaster management. In recent times, there has also been an increased understanding of the important relationship between certain environmental vulnerabilities and human action. This rapidly expanding body of knowledge can greatly improve local forecasting of natural and technological threats. A prerequisite, however, is adequate investment in information systems and information management.

2. In many countries, improved information dissemination, emergency response services and community action has allowed for a greater sensitivity to and understanding of early warning signals. This offers the opportunity to minimize human economic losses by timely intervention, such as the evacuation of communities at risk in flood areas.
3. Largely as a result of the United Nations International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (UN/IDNDR), there is increasing pressure for greater investment in prevention and mitigation actions that avert the need for expensive and often repeated assistance.
4. Funding that could support ongoing development initiatives are being diverted to provide relief for those affected by fires, floods and drought. Similarly, disaster- stricken households are obliged to reallocate their resources and energies to recovery efforts, rather than development activities.
5. Studies in Latin America and Asia suggest that the devastating effects of human and economic losses of poorer households in small community disasters are often overshadowed by more rare and more sensational disaster events. This issue has particular relevance where the absence of national and local systems for tracking disaster losses makes it impossible to accurately estimate the uninsured costs that are silently borne by the poorest households and communities.
6. Experts in disaster management are increasingly calling for a broader engagement with civil society as a whole — including the private sector, development practitioners, educators and policy makers — as a way of forming cooperative partnerships in the struggle to minimize damage caused by disasters. [SOURCE: BVI FRAMEWORK]

10.3.1 Florida Association for Volunteer Action in the Caribbean and the Americas, Inc. [FAVACA]

The Florida Association for Volunteer Action in the Caribbean and the Americas, Inc. (FAVACA), is a private not for profit organization formed in 1981. FAVACA's Florida International Volunteer Corps is the only program of its kind in the country and enjoys statutory authority under Section 288.0251 Florida Statutes. A state appropriation, voted annually since 1986, provides a funding base for an estimated 150 volunteer missions to Central America and the Caribbean this year. To date, more than 1000 volunteer missions to 25 nations and territories of the region have been conducted. We cover the expenses of Corps volunteers who donate their time and skills - on short-term technical assistance missions - to help Florida's neighbors help themselves.

Disaster Management is a key interest shared with every nation of the region. Florida's top emergency managers collaborate in disaster mitigation with overseas counterparts to everyone's benefit. [<http://www.favaca.org/about/whatis.html>]

10.3.2 United States Southern Command [US SOUTHCOM]

The United States Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) is the unified command responsible for all U.S. military activities on the land mass of Latin America south of Mexico; the waters adjacent to Central and South America; the Caribbean Sea, with its 13 island nations, and European and U.S. territories; the Gulf of Mexico; and a portion of the Atlantic Ocean. Since 26 September 1997, the command headquarters has been located at Miami, Florida. [<http://www.southcom.mil/pa/Facts/Profile.htm>]

SECTION 11: PLANS FOR THE ARTICULATION OF THE POLICY

The National Response Plans for Saint Lucia is really a cadre of plans. The plans are all “stand alone” documents that may be activated to support hazard management plans. They are inter alia:

1. GENERAL

- a. NEMP Executive Summary
- b. Comprehensive Disaster Management Strategy and Programme Framework
- c. Disaster Management Act No. 30 of 2006 [Replaces Act No 13 of 2000]
- d. Emergency Powers (Disasters) Act No. 5 of 1995 [Activated by Constitution]
- e. National Risk Register
- f. Other Relevant Laws
- g. Risk Management Benchmarking Tool [BTool]
- h. Assessment
- i. Assessment Results

2. POLICY DOCUMENTS

- a. Damage Assessment and Needs Analysis [DANA] Policy
- b. Disaster Management Policy Framework
- c. Donations and Importation of Relief Supplies
- d. Emergency Shelter Management
- e. Emergency Housing
- f. Governmental Officers Security of Travel Policy
- g. Hazard Mitigation
- h. Mass Fatality

3. GUIDELINES

- a. Engineering Guidelines for Incorporating Climate Change into the Determination of Wind Forces on Buildings and Other Structures
- b. Emergency Telecommunications Procedures Manual
- c. Guidelines for Debris Management in a Disaster
- d. Guidelines for SUMA Team
- e. Mass Crowd Events Guidelines
- f. Post Disaster Food Protection Guidelines
- g. Strategy on the Management of Used Oil
- h. Wind Speeds Guidelines

4. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

- a. Volume 1: Standing Operating Procedures for the Agencies of the National Emergency Management Organisation
- b. Volume 2: The National Emergency Operations Centre
- c. Volume 3: Standard Operating Procedures for Declaring a Disaster as enshrined in the Laws of Saint Lucia
- d. Volume 4: Systematic National Shutdown

5. NATIONAL EMERGENCY PLANS

- a. Damage Assessment and Needs Analysis [DANA] Plan
- b. Earthquake Response Plan
- c. Emergency Response Plan for the Homeless
- d. Emergency Shelter Plan
- e. Evacuation Plans
 - i. Volume 1 – Concept of Operations
 - ii. Volume 2 – Emergency Shelters List
 - iii. Volume 5 – Traffic Management Plan
 - iv. Volume 6 – Model Community Plan
 - v. Volume 6 – Community Plans
- f. Flood Plan
- g. Hazard Mitigation Plan
- h. Hazardous Materials Response Plan
- i. Hurricane Plan
 - i. Engineering Guidelines for Incorporating Climate Change into the Determination of Wind Forces on Buildings and Other Structures
 - ii. Wind Speeds Guidelines
- j. Landslide Response Plan
- k. Medical Waste and Other Bio-Hazardous Wastes Management Plan
- l. National Influenza Plan
- m. National Mass Casualty Management Plan
- n. National Plan for Transportation in Disasters
- o. Relief Distribution Plan
- p. Response Plan for Extreme Heat Event
- q. Oil Spill Contingency Plan
- r. Search and Rescue
 - i. Maritime Search and Rescue [SAR]
 - ii. Urban Search and Rescue Plan
- s. Stress Management Response Plan
- t. Telecommunications Plan
- u. Volcanic Eruption Response
 - i. Volcanic Hazard Assessment for Saint Lucia, Lesser Antilles
 - ii. Scientific Supplement to the Volcanic Hazard Assessment for Saint Lucia, Lesser Antilles
- v. Water Management Plan for Drought Conditions
- w. Well Being Plan
- x. Wildfire Management Plan

- y. Model Plans for Business Contunity

6. SECTORAL/AGENCY PLANS

- a. Information Management in Disasters
 - i. Disaster Information Kit for the Media
- b. National Civil Aviation Security Programme
- c. National Communicable Disease Surveillance Manual
- d. The Ministry of External Affairs and Civil Aviation
- e. The Saint Lucia Hospitality Industry Crisis Management Plant
 - i. Volume 0 – Concept of Operations [replaced 1996 plan]
 - ii. Volume 1 – Hurricane Plan

All may be accessed at <http://stlucia.gov.lc/nemp>

SECTION 12: AGREEMENT ESTABLISHING THE CARIBBEAN DISASTER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (CDEMA)

THE STATES PARTIES:

CONSCIOUS that the fragile economies and ecosystems of States within the Caribbean Region are extremely vulnerable to natural and man-made disasters including hurricanes, earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, droughts, floods and landslides;

RECALLING that during recent decades a succession of natural disasters including hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, landslides and volcanic eruptions adversely affected many States within the Caribbean Region;

RECOGNIZING the work of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency in disaster preparedness and response;

DESIROUS of establishing the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency to replace and advance the work of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency to ensure the sustainable development of resilient communities within the Caribbean Region;

HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

ARTICLE I

Definitions

In this Agreement, unless the context otherwise requires –

"affected Participating State" means a State in the territory of which a disaster has occurred;

"CARICOM" means the Caribbean Community;

"CDEMA" means the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency established under Article II;

"CDERA" means the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency an Institution of the Community recognized under Article 21 of the Treaty;

"Coordinating Unit" means the administrative and operational organ of CDEMA;

"Council" means the Organ of CDEMA referred to in Article VI;

"disaster" means the exposure of the human habitat to the operation of the forces of nature or to human intervention resulting in widespread destruction of lives or property, but excludes events occasioned by war or military confrontation;

"disaster management" means the development and implementation of regional and national policies to prevent and mitigate the effects of disaster ;

"Executive Director" means the Executive Director of CDEMA appointed under Article VII;

"Fund" means the Emergency Assistance Fund established under Article XXVI;

"Management Committee of the Council or MCC" means the Committee established and appointed by the Council under Article VI I;

"National Disaster Management Agency" means the government agency responsible for disaster management;

"Participating State" means a State Party to this Agreement;

"requesting State" means a Participating State which has made a request under this Agreement;

"sending State" means a Participating State which has responded to a request for assistance under this Agreement;

"State" includes a non-politically independent territory of the Caribbean

"TAC" means the Technical Advisory Committee referred to under Article X; and

"Treaty" means the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas establishing the Caribbean Community including the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) signed at Nassau, The Bahamas on the 5^h day of July 2001.

ARTICLE 11

ESTABLISHMENT OF CDEMA

The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) is hereby established with the organs, membership, structure, and functions herein set forth.

ARTICLE III

LEGAL PERSONALITY

1. CDEMA shall have international legal personality and such legal capacity as may be necessary for the exercise of its functions and the fulfillment of its objectives.
2. CDEMA and its staff shall enjoy all the usual rights, privileges and immunities of Agencies which have international legal personality.

ARTICLE IV
MEMBERSHIP

Membership of CDEMA shall be open to -

- (a) the States and territories listed in the Annex; and
- (b) other States within the Caribbean Region recommended for membership by the MCC under Article XXXIX.

ARTICLE V
OBJECTIVES

CDEMA shall have the following objectives -

- (a) mobilising and coordinating disaster relief;
- (b) mitigating or eliminating, as far as practicable, the immediate consequences of disasters in Participating States;
- (c) providing immediate and coordinated response by means of emergency disaster relief to any affected Participating State;
- (d) securing, coordinating and providing to interested intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations reliable and comprehensive information on disasters affecting any Participating State;
- (e) encouraging -
 - (i) the adoption of disaster loss reduction and mitigation policies and practices at the national and regional
level;
 - (ii) cooperative arrangements and mechanisms to facilitate the development of a culture of disaster loss
reduction; and
- (f) coordinating the establishment, enhancement and maintenance of adequate emergency disaster response

capabilities among the Participating States.

ARTICLE VI
ORGANS OF CDEMA

CDEMA shall have the following Organs with the functions specified in this Agreement:

- (a) The Council;
- (b) The Technical Advisory Committee; and
- (c) The Coordinating Unit.

ARTICLE V11
THE COUNCIL

1. The Council shall consist of the Heads of Government of the Participating States.
2. Each member of the Council shall be entitled to nominate any other competent person to represent that member at meetings of the Council.
3. The Council shall meet in ordinary session at least once in every calendar year and shall convene in extraordinary sessions at the request of three quarters of the Participating States.
4. The Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson shall be elected from among members of the **Council**.
5. The Chairperson shall preside over the meetings of the Council and the MCC.
6. The Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson shall serve for a period of one year and shall be eligible for re-election.
7. In the absence of the Chairperson, the Deputy Chairperson shall preside over meetings of the Council and the MCC.
8. In the absence of both the Chairperson and the Deputy Chairperson, the Members of the Council present may elect any member to act in the position of Chairperson.
9. The **Council** shall regulate its own procedure.

ARTICLE VIII

FUNCTIONS OF THE COUNCIL

The Council shall -

- (a) determine the policies of CDEMA;
- (b) receive and approve the annual budget and the contribution of the Participating States to CDEMA;
- (c) designate national disaster and disaster management organizations as Sub-Regional Disaster Emergency Operational Units with the prior consent of the Governments of the Participating States involved;
- (d) appoint the Executive Director on the recommendation of the MCC;
- (e) consider and make decisions based on the recommendations of the TAC;
- (f) perform any other function as it deems necessary or expedient to achieve the objectives of this Agreement.

ARTICLE IX

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OF THE COUNCIL

1. There shall be established a Management Committee of the Council whose members shall be appointed by the Council.
2. The membership of the MCC shall comprise -
 - (i) four persons, each representing one of the sub-regions of CDEMA, one of whom shall be Chairperson of the Council;
 - (ii) the Chairperson of the TAC; and
 - (iii) the executive Director.
3. The Terms of Reference of the MCC shall be determined by the Council.

ARTICLE X

THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

1. The Technical Advisory Committee shall consist of the national disaster coordinators of the Participating States.

2. Notwithstanding paragraph 1, persons may be selected by the TAC from regional institutions engaged in activities related to disaster management to participate in meetings of the TAC.
3. The Chairperson of the TAC shall be elected from amongst its members and shall not be elected to serve as Chairperson for more than two consecutive terms.
5. The Chairperson shall convene the meetings of the TAC which shall meet at least once in every calendar year and convene extraordinary meetings at the request of not less than one-half of its members.
6. The Executive Director shall be the Secretary of the TAC.
7. The TAC shall regulate its own procedure.

ARTICLE XI

FUNCTIONS OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The TAC shall -

- (a) act in an advisory capacity to CDEMA on matters relating to strategies for resource mobilization, work programme review and programme development;
- (b) recommend standards and procedures for the fair and equitable deployment of resources for disaster management made available by Participating States;
- (c) recommend the standards and procedures for triggering the disaster response mechanism;
- (d) develop and recommend procedures for mobilising national resources to provide assistance in a timely and efficacious manner;
- (e) recommend guidelines for establishing systems for maintaining and sharing inventories of critical resources likely to be needed by Participating States in the event of a disaster;
- (f) make recommendations for the rapid access of financial resources to cover the cost of mobilisation in the event of disaster in a Participating State;
- (g) recommend protocols to facilitate the movement of resources originating in or transiting in a Participating State having regard to the requirements of immigration and customs authorities;
- (h) recommend and regularly review pro forma lists of the likely requirements of Participating States in the event of disasters;
- (i) advise CARICOM institutions and national institutions on matters relevant to its functions;
- (j) forward its recommendations to the Council for its consideration; and
- (k) perform such other functions as the Council may determine.

ARTICLE XII

THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE COORDINATING UNIT

The Coordinating Unit shall have its headquarters where the Council decides.

ARTICLE XIII

FUNCTIONS OF THE COORDINATING UNIT

1. In addition to any other functions which the Council may specify, the Coordinating Unit shall -
 - (a) develop and maintain a reliable damage assessment system and procedures to facilitate rapid and effective evaluation of national disasters;
 - (b) develop and maintain a comprehensive and reliable data base of all relevant resources necessary to achieve the objectives of CDEMA and a system for updating the database;
 - (c) establish, equip and maintain a coordinated emergency operations system capable of responding to emergency situations;
 - (d) establish and maintain an efficient and reliable system of communications with sub-regional operational focal points in order to facilitate the mobilisation, deployment and coordination of disaster response supplies and services;
 - (e) establish and maintain a reliable system of communications with the heads of national disaster management Agencies and ensure that their disaster response capabilities are maintained at agreed levels of operational efficiency;
 - (f) establish arrangements with regional media houses designed to ensure the dissemination of reliable information on national disasters to the public;
 - (g) establish arrangements with the CARICOM Committee of Ambassadors in the metropolitan centres in order to ensure the dissemination to them of reliable information on national disasters in Participating States and their cooperation in mobilising disaster relief resources on a timely and structured basis;
 - (h) establish arrangements with regional airlines and shipping lines in order to ensure access to their facilities on a priority basis in the event of a disaster;
 - (i) establish and maintain relations with international relief organisations in order to facilitate accessing their resources in the event of a disaster;
 - (j) mobilise and organise technical assistance from interested national and international bodies to assist in the development of the disaster response capabilities of Participating States;
 - (k) provide a clearing house for relevant information and intelligence in all matters relating to disasters including current research being undertaken in all related regional institutions;

- (l) on the basis of a distress call or on such other request as may be agreed after consultation with Sub-Regional Disaster Response Operational Units be capable of triggering the mechanism;
 - (m) provide assistance on request to the heads of national disaster management Agencies in the event of a disaster;
 - (n) on request liaise with the disciplined forces of sending States both in the planning and response stage of any operation mounted after the activation of the triggering mechanism;
 - (o) assist in the development of comprehensive disaster management capabilities and review periodically the disaster response capabilities of Participating States giving due consideration to the availability of resources for immediate and timely response to disaster situations;
 - (p) establish collaborative arrangements and mechanisms with regional disaster management stakeholders to promote disaster loss reduction; and
 - (q) prepare the administrative and emergency budgets of CDEMA for submission to the MCC.
2. The Coordinating Unit shall have the following programming areas -
- (a) education, research and information;
 - (b) finance and administration;
 - (c) preparedness and response;
 - (d) mitigation and research ; and
 - (e) any other programming area which the Council may determine.

ARTICLE XIV

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1. There shall be an Executive Director who shall manage the Coordinating Unit and be the Chief Executive Officer of CDEMA.
2. The Executive Director shall be appointed for a term not exceeding three years and is eligible for reappointment.
3. A Deputy Executive Director shall be appointed by the MCC on the recommendation of the Executive Director for a term not exceeding three years and is eligible for reappointment.

4. The Executive Director and the Deputy Executive Director shall be appointed from among persons with experience in matters relating to emergency relief operations, social welfare and management.

ARTICLE XV

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1. The Executive Director shall have the following responsibilities -
 - (a) implementing the policies of CDEMA;
 - (b) the administration and coordination of activities and programmes of CDEMA;
 - (c) the control of the revenue and expenditure of CDEMA as approved by the Council;
 - (d) the creation and implementation of special programmes and projects where necessary;
 - (e) ensuring that correct procedures are followed with respect to all matters within the competence of CDEMA;
 - (f) prepare an administrative budget biennially;
 - (g) cause the accounts of CDEMA and the Fund to be audited annually by external auditors approved by the MCC;
 - (h) submit annually the audited financial report of CDEMA and the Fund and the budget of CDEMA to the Council for its consideration;
 - (i) submit an annual report to the Council on the work of CDEMA;
 - (j) appoint the staff of the Coordinating Unit except the Deputy Executive Director;
 - (k) subject to the approval of the MCC, the determination of the terms and conditions of service of the staff of the Coordinating Unit; and
 - (l) the performance of any other function or duty in pursuance of the objectives of CDEMA.
2. In the performance of their duties the Executive Director and staff of CDEMA shall seek to maintain their independence and shall not engage in any activity or function in a manner which would compromise the functional independence of CDEMA.

ARTICLE XVI

SUB-REGIONAL DISASTER EMERGENCY RESPONSE OPERATIONAL UNITS

1. Where, pursuant to paragraph (e) of Article VII, the Council has designated Sub-Regional Disaster Emergency Response Operational Units, such bodies shall -
 - (a) acquire and maintain on an updated basis comprehensive information on the facilities and services available in each of the Participating States for which they have responsibility;
 - (b) maintain and test on a regular basis communications with the Coordinating Unit and with critical response agencies under the control of national relief organisations;
 - (c) maintain independent fuel and power supplies and ensure that relevant physical facilities are in a condition to withstand a major disaster; and
 - (d) keep and maintain at the operational focal point in serviceable and optimal working condition an equipment package containing essential items recommended by the TAC.
2. In making a designation referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article, the Council shall identify the States for which the Sub-Regional Disaster Response Operational Unit concerned shall have responsibility.

ARTICLE XVII

THE ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET

1. CDEMA shall establish an administrative budget, the funds of which shall be used to defray the ordinary expenses incurred in administering its affairs.
2. Participating States shall contribute to the administrative budget in accordance with a scale of assessment recommended by the MCC and approved by the Council.
3. A Participating State whose economy has been severely affected by a natural disaster may request a waiver of assessed contributions to the budget of CDEMA.
4. The Executive Director, with the approval of the Council, shall establish financial regulations for CDEMA and the Fund in accordance with international accounting standards.

ARTICLE XV111

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FUND

1. CDEMA shall establish an Emergency Assistance Fund (hereinafter referred to as "the Fund") which shall be used solely to defray expenses incurred in connection with the rendering of assistance in the event of a disaster occurring in a Participating State.
2. Participating States shall contribute to the Fund in accordance with a scale of assessment recommended by the MCC and approved by the Council.

3. A Participating State whose economy has been severely affected by a natural disaster may request a waiver of assessed contributions to the budget of the Fund.
4. The Executive Director may accept contributions to the Fund from external sources on such conditions as may be prescribed by them and agreed by the MCC for the benefit of all Participating States.

ARTICLE XIX

UNDERTAKINGS OF PARTICIPATING STATES

Without prejudice to the requirement to discharge any other obligations assumed under or in connection with this Agreement, Participating States undertake to -

- (a) establish and maintain, as the case may be, national relief organizations capable of responding swiftly, effectively and in a coordinated manner to disasters in Participating States;
- (b) establish emergency disaster planning groups and define national policies and priorities in the event of disasters;
- (c) provide national disaster management agencies with adequate support including named emergency coordinators, liaison officers within key government Ministries, emergency support services and access to utilities.;
- (d) ensure that national disaster management agencies and their coordinators have specific functions and responsibilities to ensure the development of an adequate response capability to support adequate responses to national disasters;
- (e) define the role and functions of key agencies including the Security Services, Health and Public Works in disaster emergency response management and establish a system for regular review of their procedures to ensure coordinated response;
- (f) establish and equip a suitable emergency operations centre capable of handling emergency telecommunications and coordinating emergency response involving relevant services;
- (g) develop and maintain an emergency telecommunications system based on the most appropriate technology to ensure the coordination of emergency operations among stakeholders;
- (h) establish and strengthen procedures for coping with major disaster threats and maintain review systems for testing the procedures through drills and simulations;
- (i) review and rationalize legal arrangements for disaster mitigation and emergency action;
- (j) review and catalogue past disaster events and list credible future emergency responses and identify and map areas with special problems and peculiarities such as flood or landslide prone areas;
- (k) establish data bases of key resources, both human and material, and a system for keeping them current and to computerize and integrate them into an automated emergency information system;

- (l) develop, in collaboration with competent governmental agencies, an emergency shelter policy and programme involving the full participation of local officials from community-based organizations;
- (m) develop and review a system for community participation, local mobilisation and counter disaster action in the event of isolation;
- (n) develop strategies for loss reduction in the public and private sectors focusing on vital economic activities and critical facilities;
- (o) develop a system and procedures for damage assessment in order to facilitate rapid and effective post impact evaluation;
- (p) develop and implement a comprehensive disaster public awareness, information and education programme involving media houses, schools, voluntary agencies and other institutions in order to ensure public participation and community involvement in the disaster management system;
- (q) develop and implement appropriate training programmes for persons involved in the disaster management system;
- (r) identify and seek participation in bilateral and multilateral technical cooperation programmes designed to develop disaster management capabilities;
- (s) identify and maintain in a state of readiness and make available immediately on request by the Executive Director relevant material and human resources in the event of disaster.

**ARTICLE XX
RELATIONS WITH GOVERNMENT AND
NON-GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONS**

1. CDEMA may conclude agreements with Governmental, Inter-Governmental and Non-Governmental Organizations or Agencies in order to achieve its objectives.
2. Unless the Council decides otherwise, the Executive Director may negotiate and conclude such Agreements on behalf of CDEMA.

**ARTICLE XXIII
COMPETENT AUTHORITIES AND CONTACT POINTS**

1. In the absence of a contrary indication from a Participating State the competent authority and contact point authorised to make requests for and accept offers of assistance in the event of a disaster shall be the head of the National Disaster Management Agency.
2. The Coordinating Unit shall be immediately informed of any change of the contact and focal points of Participating States.
3. The Coordinating Unit shall expeditiously inform Participating States and relevant international organizations with the information referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article.

ARTICLE XXIV

CONFIDENTIALITY AND PUBLIC STATEMENTS

1. Participating States their officials and the staff of CDEMA shall respect and not disclose any confidential information received by them in connection with assistance requested in the event of a disaster and the information shall be used exclusively for its intended purpose.
2. The sending State shall use its best endeavours to coordinate with the requesting State before releasing information to the public on the assistance provided in connection with a disaster.

ARTICLE XXV

COSTS OF PROVIDING ASSISTANCE

Except as may otherwise be agreed between them, the expenses incurred by a sending State in providing assistance to a requesting State shall be defrayed by the sending State.

ARTICLE XXVI

TERMINATION OF ASSISTANCE

1. The Executive Director shall, subject to paragraph 2, after consultation with the requesting State, determine the period of response to a disaster.
2. The requesting or sending State may, at any time, after appropriate consultation and by notification in writing terminates the receipt or provision of assistance received or provided under this Agreement.

ARTICLE XXVII

PRIVILEGES, IMMUNITIES AND FACILITIES TO BE ACCORDED A SENDING STATE AND ITS PERSONNEL

1. The requesting State shall accord to personnel of the sending State and personnel acting on its behalf the necessary privileges, immunities and facilities for the performance of their functions in rendering assistance.
2. Subject to prior notification by the sending State and acceptance by the requesting State of the personnel of the sending State or personnel acting on its behalf, the requesting State shall:
 - (a) grant to such personnel immunity from arrest and detention;
 - (b) grant to such personnel immunity from legal process in respect of words spoken or written and in respect of all acts and omissions in rendering assistance and the immunity shall continue notwithstanding that the period of assistance has been terminated;
 - (c) grant to such personnel exemption from taxes, duties or other charges, in respect of the performance of their functions in rendering assistance, as is accorded to diplomatic personnel in accordance with international law;

- (d) facilitate the entry into, stay in and departure from its territory of personnel so notified and accepted.
3. The requesting State shall -
- (a) accord the sending State exemption from taxes, duties or other charges on equipment and property brought into the territory of the requesting State by the sending State for the purpose of rendering assistance;
 - (b) confer immunity from seizure, attachment or requisition of such equipment and property and ensure their return to the sending State; and
 - (c) as far as possible, facilitate access to medical care of sick or injured personnel deployed during the period of assistance.
4. Persons enjoying privileges and immunities under this Article shall respect the law and regulations of the requesting State and shall not interfere in its domestic affairs.

ARTICLE XXVIII

TRANSIT OF PERSONNEL, EQUIPMENT AND PROPERTY

Participating States shall, at the request of either the requesting State or the sending State, take all measures necessary to facilitate the transit through their territory of duty notified personnel, equipment and property involved in rendering assistance to or from a requesting State.

ARTICLE XXIX

CLAIMS AND COMPENSATION

1. Participating States shall cooperate in order to facilitate the determination of legal proceedings and the settlement of claims under this Article.
2. In the absence of an agreement to the contrary the requesting State shall, in respect of death or injury to persons or damage to or loss of property or damage to the environment caused within its territory or under its control or jurisdiction by personnel of the requested State in the course of providing assistance –
 - (a) not bring any legal proceedings against the sending State or persons or other legal entities acting on its behalf;
 - (b) assume responsibility for dealing with all legal proceedings and claims brought by third parties against the sending State or against persons or other legal entities acting on its behalf except in cases of willful misconduct or gross negligence;
 - (c) hold the sending State or persons or other legal entities acting on its behalf harmless in respect of legal proceedings referred to in sub-paragraph (b);
 - (d) compensate the sending State or persons or other legal entities acting on its behalf for death or injury to personnel of the sending State or persons or other legal entities acting on its behalf; and

- (e) for loss of or damage to non-consumable equipment or materials brought to the requesting State for the purpose of rendering assistance except in the case of the willful misconduct or gross negligence by the personnel of the sending State.
3. Nothing in this Article shall be construed to prevent compensation or indemnity available under any applicable international agreement or national law of a Participating State nor to require the requesting State to apply paragraph 2 of this Article, in whole or in part, to its nationals or permanent residents.

ARTICLE XXX

PRIVELEGES AND IMMUNITIES OF CDEMA

1. CDEMA its property and assets wherever located and by whomsoever held shall enjoy immunity from every form of legal process except or in so far as in any particular case the Executive Director has expressly waived its immunity. Any waiver of immunity shall not extend to any measure of execution.
2. Save as provided in paragraph 1 the property of CDEMA, wherever located or by whomsoever held, shall be immune from search, acquisition, confiscation, expropriation and any other form of interference, whether by executive, administrative or judicial action.
3. This Article shall not be construed as preventing the Government of a Participating State from taking appropriate action in connection with the investigation of accidents involving motor vehicles belonging to or operated on behalf of CDEMA.

ARTICLE XXXI

ARCHIVES OF CDEMA

1. The archives of CDEMA shall be inviolable wherever located.
2. Proprietary data, confidential information and personnel records shall not be placed in archives open to public

ARTICLE XXXII

FACILITIES IN RESPECT OF COMMUNICATIONS

1. CDEMA shall enjoy in Participating States freedom of communication for its official communications.
2. The official correspondence and all other forms of official communications shall be inviolable.
3. CDEMA shall have the right to use codes and to dispatch and receive correspondence by courier in sealed bags, which shall not be searched or detained unless the competent authorities have reasonable grounds to believe that the sealed bags do not only contain articles, correspondence or documents for the exclusive official use of CDEMA, in which case the bag shall be opened only in the presence of an officer of CDEMA.

4. This Article shall not preclude the adoption of appropriate security measures in the interest of a participating State or its Government.

ARTICLE XXXIII

REPRESENTATIVES AND STAFF OF CDEMA

Representatives of Participating States attending meetings of the Council, the MCC or the TAC as well as the Executive Director and other staff of CDEMA, shall enjoy in the territory of each Participating State-

- (a) immunity from legal process with respect to acts performed by them in the exercise of their functions, except to the extent that the State which they represent or CDEMA as appropriate expressly waives this immunity in any particular case;
- (b) where they are not nationals of that Participating State, the same exemptions from immigration restrictions, alien registration requirements and national service obligations, the same facilities as regards exchange restrictions and the same treatment in respect of traveling facilities as are accorded by that Participating State to the representatives, officials and employees of comparable rank of other Participating States.

ARTICLE XXXIV

EXEMPTION FROM TAXES AND CUSTOMS DUTIES

1. CDEMA, its assets, property, income, operations and transactions shall be exempt from all direct taxation and goods imported or exported for its official use shall be exempt from all customs duties. CDEMA shall not claim exemption from taxes which are no more than charges for services rendered.
2. Where purchases of goods or services of substantial value necessary for the official activities of CDEMA are made by or on behalf of CDEMA, and where the price of the goods or services includes taxes or duties, appropriate measures shall, to the extent practicable, be taken by Participating States to grant exemptions from such taxes or duties or provide for their reimbursement.
3. Goods imported or purchased under an exemption provided for in this Article shall not be sold or otherwise disposed of in the territory of the Participating State granting the exemptions, except under conditions agreed with that Participating State.
4. No tax shall be levied by Participating States in respect of salaries, other types of emoluments or any other form of payment made by CDEMA to the Executive Director and staff of CDEMA as well as experts performing missions for CDEMA.
5. Paragraph 4 does not apply where the Executive Director or the staff member of CDEMA is a national of the Participating State where CDEMA is located.

ARTICLE XXXV

SUSPENSION OF RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP

1. A Participating State which is in arrears in the payment of its financial contribution to the administrative budget of CDEMA shall have no vote in the Council or the MCC if the amount of the arrears equals or exceeds the amount of the contributions due from it for the preceding two financial years.
2. A Participating State which has violated the obligations assumed under this Agreement may be suspended from the exercise of the rights and privileges of membership by the Council.

ARTICLE XXXVI

ARBITRATION

1. Any dispute between a State Party and CDEMA arising out of the interpretation or application of this Agreement, which is not settled by negotiation or other agreed mode of settlement shall be referred for final decision to an arbitral tribunal of three arbitrators at the instance of either party.
2. Each party shall be entitled to appoint one arbitrator within fifteen days following the request of either party and the two arbitrators shall within fifteen days following the date of their appointments appoint a third arbitrator who shall be the Chairperson of the arbitral tribunal.
3. Where any party fails to appoint an arbitrator under paragraph 2 the other party may request the Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community to appoint an arbitrator within ten days.
4. Where the two arbitrators appointed under paragraph 2 fail to appoint a third arbitrator either party may request the Secretary General of the Caribbean Community to appoint an arbitrator within ten days.
5. The arbitral tribunal shall establish its own rules of procedure.

ARTICLE XXXVII

SIGNATURE AND RATIFICATION

The Agreement shall be open for signature by the States listed in the Annex and shall be subject to ratification in accordance with their respective constitutional procedures.

ARTICLE XXXVIII

ENTRY INTO FORCE

This Agreement shall enter into force when Instruments of Ratification have been deposited by at least seven of the States listed in the Annex.

ARTICLE XXXIX

ACCESSION

1. This Agreement shall be open to accession by any Caribbean State which on the recommendation of the MCC has been admitted to membership of the CDEMA by the Council on such terms and conditions as the Council may decide.
2. A State admitted to membership in accordance with paragraph 1 shall deposit an Instrument of Accession with the Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community.

ARTICLE XL

DEPOSITARY

1. The original of this Agreement and any amendments thereto shall be deposited with the Secretary General of the Caribbean Community
2. The Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community shall notify the Coordinating Unit of CDEMA of the Deposit of Instruments of Ratification or Accession, as the case may be and forward certified copies of such Instruments to the Coordinating Unit.

ARTICLE XLI

AMENDMENTS

1. Any Participating State may propose amendments to this Agreement.
2. Any proposal for an amendment to this Agreement shall be submitted to the Coordinating Unit, which shall transmit it to the MCC with its comments.
3. The MCC shall consider the proposal together with the comments of the Coordinating Unit and make a recommendation to the Council.
4. The Council shall consider the proposal for amendment and may adopt it with such modifications as it deems necessary.
5. Amendments shall enter into force when ratified by all Participating States.

ARTICLE XLII

WITHDRAWAL

1. Any Participating State may withdraw from CDEMA.
2. Any Participating State wishing to withdraw from CDEMA shall give to the Coordinating Unit twelve months' written notice of its intention to do so and the Executive Director shall immediately notify the other Participating States.
3. A notice given under paragraph 2 of this Article may be withdrawn at any time prior to the date on which withdrawal is to take effect.

4. A Participating State withdrawing from CDEMA shall honour any financial obligations duly assumed by it during the period of its membership.

ARTICLE XLIII

PROVISIONAL APPLICATION

Seven or more of the Participating States listed in the Annex to this Agreement may, upon signature, or at any later date before this Agreement enters into force, declare their intention to apply it provisionally.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned representatives, being duly authorised by their respective Governments, have signed this Agreement.

Signed by the Government of Anguilla on the ... day of ... 2008 at ...

Signed by the Government of Antigua and Barbuda on the 3rd day of July, 2008 at St Johns, Antigua and Barbuda. Original signed

Signed by the Government of The Bahamas on the 3rd day of July, 2008 at St Johns, Antigua and Barbuda. Original signed by

Signed by the Government of Barbados on the 3rd day of July, 2008 at St Johns, Antigua and Barbuda. Original signed by David Thompson

Signed by the Government of Belize on the ... day of ... 2008 at ...

Signed by the Government of British Virgin Islands on the ... day of ... 2008 at ...

Signed by the Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica on the 2nd day of July, 2008 at St Johns, Antigua and Barbuda. Original signed

Signed by the Government of Grenada on the ... day of ... 2008 at ...

Signed by the Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana on the 3rd day of July, 2008 at St Johns, Antigua and Barbuda. Original signed by Bharrat Jagdeo

Signed by the Government of Jamaica on the ... day of ... 2008 at ...

Signed by the Government of Montserrat on the ... day of ... 2008 at ...

Signed by the Government of the Federation of Saint Christopher and Nevis on the ... day of ... 2008 at ...

Signed by the Government of Saint Lucia on the 3rd day of July, 2008 at St Johns, Antigua and Barbuda. Original signed by Stephenson King

Signed by the Government of St Vincent and the Grenadines on the 3rd day of July, 2008 at St Johns, Antigua and Barbuda. Original signed by Ralph Gonzales

Signed by the Government of the Republic of Suriname on the ... day of ... 2008 at ...

Signed by the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the ... day of ... 2008 at ...

Signed by the Government of Turks and Caicos on the ... day of ... 2008 at ...

SECTION 13: AGREEMENT BETWEEN MEMBER STATES AND ASSOCIATE MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION OF CARIBBEAN STATES FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION ON NATURAL DISASTERS

The Contracting Parties,

Being Parties to the Convention Establishing the Association of Caribbean States, (hereinafter called the Convention), signed in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, on July 24th, 1994,

Taking into account that clause 1, paragraph d, of Article III of the Convention, specifies that the Association is an organization for consultation, concerted action and co-operation, whose purpose is to identify and promote the implementation of policies and programmes aimed, among other things, at establishing co-operation agreements which respond to the diverse cultural identities, developmental needs and regulatory systems of the region,

Considering that the Ministerial Council of the Association, during its First Ordinary Meeting, held in Guatemala City, 1st December 1995, approved by Agreement No. 1/95, the Work Programme for the first phase of the Association, and decided that the initial activity should be to focus, inter alia, on accomplishing the priority actions in relation to natural disasters which affect the Member States and Associate Members of the Association,

Recalling, that the Ministerial Council of the Association, through Agreement No. 1/95, indicated that with the objective of increasing the ability of the Member States and Associate Members of the Association to cope with disasters and so mitigate their negative effects, actions will be carried out with the aim of developing a Co-operation System in this area,

Willing to increase and strengthen regional co-operation and emphasizing the importance of it in the effective management of natural disasters, especially when oriented towards reducing the vulnerability of the population, the infrastructure and economic and social activities of the Parties,

Aware of the vulnerability of the Member States and Associate Members to a diversity of natural disasters,

Recognizing the adverse consequences of natural disasters on the health and well-being of the population, bio-diversity, the economy and infrastructure,

Aware that for the development of the region, it is necessary to establish a legal framework that promotes a Co-operation System for the prevention and management of natural disasters,

Have agreed to the following:

ARTICLE 1

Definitions

For the purpose of this Agreement the definitions outlined in Article I of the Convention shall apply.

Furthermore, the Agreement shall consider the following definitions:

1. Natural disaster: damage caused by any natural phenomenon (hurricane, tornado, storm, tidal wave, flood, tsunami, earthquake, volcanic eruption, landslide, forest fire, epidemic, epizootics, agricultural plague and drought, among others), which affects people, infrastructure and the productive sectors of different economic activities with such severity and magnitude that it goes beyond the local response capacity and for which regional assistance is required, upon request of one or more of the affected parties, in order to supplement the efforts and resources available to them, and to reduce damage and losses.
2. Disaster planning: this is part of the process of preparing to confront a future disaster. This planning includes activities aimed at prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, rehabilitation and reconstruction.
3. Disaster prevention: this term defines all the activities and technical and legal measures that must be carried out during the planning process for socio-economic development, with a view to avoiding the loss of human lives and damage done to the economy, as a consequence of natural disasters.
4. Mitigation: an action aimed at reducing the impact of natural disasters on the population and the economy.
5. Preparation: Organizational activities which ensure that the systems, procedures and resources required to confront a natural disaster, are available in order to provide timely assistance to those affected, using existing mechanisms wherever possible.
6. Disaster reduction and management: all prevention, mitigation, preparation and response measures to guarantee adequate protection for the population and the economy, in the event of a natural disaster.
7. Risk: relationship between the frequency and the consequences of the occurrence of a particular event.
8. Vulnerability: susceptibility to loss or damage of elements exposed to the impact of a natural phenomenon.

9. Secondary threat: this is the result of a primary hazard, usually of greater severity than the previous one.

10. Disaster response: this involves the activities carried out immediately following the disaster, and includes, *inter alia*, rescue and response activities, the provision of health services, food, shelter, water, sanitation facilities and other basic necessities for survival.

11. Highly vulnerable areas: zones, parts of the territory or territories where there are elements which are highly susceptible to suffering severe, large scale damage, caused by one or more natural or anthropogenous phenomena and that require special attention in the sphere of cooperation among the parties.

12. Contracting Parties: The Member States and Associate Members eligible to participate in the Association, in accordance with what is specified in Article IV of the Convention.

ARTICLE 2

Objective

The objective of this Agreement is to develop a network of legally binding mechanisms that promote co-operation for prevention, mitigation and management of natural disasters, through the collaboration of the contracting parties among themselves and with organizations which work in the field of natural disasters in the region.

ARTICLE 3

Highly Vulnerable Areas

The Contracting Parties may, when necessary, declare within their territory, their territories or specific zones, Highly Vulnerable Areas, with a view to developing plans for co-operation in the prevention and management of natural disasters.

In order to establish a Highly Vulnerable Area, the Contracting Parties must take the following procedure into account:

1. The Party that exercises sovereignty, or sovereign rights or jurisdiction over a Highly Vulnerable Area shall submit its nomination for inclusion in the registry of Highly Vulnerable Areas of the Association of Caribbean States, which will be created and updated by the Secretariat, on the basis of the nomination approved by the Special Committee responsible for the subject of Natural Disasters.

2. The nominations shall be presented in accordance with the guidelines and criteria concerning the identification and selection of the Highly Vulnerable Areas, which are determined by the Contracting Parties, on the advice of the Special Committee responsible for the subject of Natural Disasters.

3. Each Party which submits a nomination shall make available to the Contracting Parties, through the ACS Secretariat, the following information on their Highly Vulnerable Areas:

- a) name of the area;
- b) bio-geography of the area (limits, physical characteristics, climate, social composition, etc.);
- c) vulnerability of the area;
- d) management programmes and plans;
- e) research programmes;
- f) characteristics of the status of disaster prevention and/or mitigation.

In order to fully develop co-operation among the Contracting Parties in the management of Highly Vulnerable Areas and to ensure effective fulfillment of the obligations outlined in this Agreement, it is recommended that each Party adopt and implement measures for planning, management, surveillance and control, which shall include at least the following:

formulation and adoption of disaster management guidelines suited to the Highly Vulnerable Areas;

adoption of a management plan which outlines the legal and institutional framework and the protective measures suitable for the Highly Vulnerable Area or Areas;

development of awareness programmes, local organization for emergencies and education of the population and decision-makers, to reinforce the prevention and/or mitigation measures;

active participation of local communities, whenever their direct presence is required, in planning, assistance, and training of the local population;

adoption of mechanisms for financing the development and effective management of the Highly Vulnerable Areas and the promotion of programmes of mutual assistance;

establishment of procedures for regulating or authorizing activities compatible with the common guidelines and criteria established by the Contracting Parties;

development of adequate infrastructure and training of interdisciplinary technical staff competent in the management of disasters.

ARTICLE 4

Mutual Co-operation and Assistance

The Contracting Parties shall promote:

1. the formulation and implementation of standards and laws, policies and programmes for the management and prevention of natural disasters, in a gradual and progressive manner;

2. joint actions, with a view to identifying, planning and undertaking programmes for the management of natural disasters, with the assistance of specialized natural disaster organizations operating in the region;
3. co-operation in the formulation, funding and implementation of aid programmes for those Parties that request them, especially with regard to assistance from regional and international organizations. These programmes shall be oriented towards educating the population in the ways of preventing and coping with natural disasters, training of scientific, technical and administrative staff, as well as the acquisition, use, design and development of suitable equipment;
4. periodic exchange of information, by diverse means, concerning their best experiences in the reduction of disasters;
5. the adoption of existing standards for the classification and management of humanitarian supplies and donations with the purpose of improved transparency and efficiency in humanitarian assistance.

The mobilization of the necessary resources for responding to natural disasters among the Contracting Parties shall always be done at the request of the affected Party and shall be done in accordance with the principles and norms of international law, and existing co-operation agreements, particularly with respect to sovereignty and self-determination of the affected Party;

ARTICLE 5

Scientific and Technical Activities

The Contracting Parties shall promote scientific and technical activities geared towards:

1. the creation of an inventory of experts to facilitate impact evaluation missions in collaboration with the sub-regional, regional and international agencies or teams that have already been established;
2. the inventory in the field of prevention and mitigation and other related aspects of natural disaster management;
3. the identification of opportunities to strengthen intra and inter-regional co-operation, including academic institutions and research centres;
4. the exchange of technical materials and reports concerning the management of natural disasters;
5. the preparation, circulation and continual updating of a register of persons qualified in different disciplines to assist the region in the event of disasters;

6. unification of the methodologies, lexicon and other aspects of the terminology of natural disasters, for use by the Contracting Parties.

ARTICLE 6

Reports to the ACS Ministerial Council

The Contracting Parties shall present to the ACS Ministerial Council, at every Ordinary Meeting, through the Special Committee responsible for Natural Disasters, a report on all the activities conducted for the management of disasters in the region, including basic statistics, the projected impact on regional and national development and the results obtained following the implementation of the present Agreement.

ARTICLE 7

Establishment of Common Guidelines and Criteria

The Parties shall evaluate and propose to the Ministerial Council, the adoption of common guidelines and criteria, particularly on the following aspects:

identification and selection of Highly Vulnerable Areas with the aim of their being applied to the procedure for the establishment of these same Areas;

provision of information on the Highly Vulnerable Areas, activities and priorities;

national and regional initiatives aimed at reducing the vulnerability of the population;

strengthening of national sub-regional and regional infrastructure;

identification of common interests in order to ensure and adopt a position of consensus in various regional and international fora;

urging of the Contracting Parties to include issues related to the prevention and mitigation of natural disasters in their co-operation projects and to give priority to such issues on their agenda of international negotiation;

the establishment of a system of co-operation in education for the management of natural disasters supported by the development of a common curriculum, the benefit of shared academic resources, the promotion of teacher exchanges and greater use of the Internet;

promotion of action programmes for the incorporation of disaster management in urban and rural planning policies;

recommending the Contracting Parties to initiate dialogue with insurance companies in order to promote the adoption of prevention and mitigation measures by means of incentives;

promotion of the continuous training of personnel in the field of disaster management, in the areas of health, emergency response and telecommunications and for the development and improvement of early warning systems at the regional, sub-regional and national levels;

promotion of the development of centres for documentation on disasters at the regional and sub-regional levels, taking into consideration existing capabilities and using a common methodology of indexation and standardization ;

granting priority at the regional and sub-regional levels to:

- i. carry out activities of co-operation and mutual aid which are dealt with in Article 4 above;
- ii. complete scientific and technical activities particularly those specified in Article 5 above;
- iii. design training programmes in the management of disasters;
- iv. design regional and sub-regional projects to be presented to the ACS Special Fund and to the international finance agencies.

ARTICLE 8

Prevention and Mitigation

1. The Contracting Parties shall adopt both individually and jointly, all the measures required to support intra-regional and inter-regional co-operation in the management of natural disasters.
2. Each Contracting Party shall periodically exchange with the others, updated information on the implementation of the present Agreement.
3. In the area of the transportation of material and equipment for natural disaster prevention and mitigation, the Contracting Parties shall take the necessary measures to obtain the co-operation of the private sector in air and maritime transportation.

ARTICLE 9

Relation with other Regional and International Organizations/Conventions

The Contracting Parties:

1. Recognize the Regional Disaster Information Centre (CRID) as a focal point for the diffusion and dissemination of information on the issue of natural disasters.
2. May invite to their meetings the authorities of regional, sub-regional and international organizations and institutions in order to encourage the exchange of experiences, data and human resources in the management of natural disasters in the Wider Caribbean.

3. Shall ensure the effective co-ordination of the technical assistance supplied, prior to a disaster, by a Contracting Party, third parties or international organizations.
4. Shall collaborate with existing sub-regional co-ordination mechanisms, such as CDERA and CEPREDENAC, in their disaster management activities.

ARTICLE 10

Institutional Provisions

1. Each Contracting Party shall designate a Focal Point which will act as liaison with the ACS with regard to the implementation of this Agreement.
2. The Contracting Parties designate the Special Committee responsible for Natural Disasters, in collaboration with the ACS Secretariat, to exercise the following functions, in accordance with their respective competence:
 - a) convene and lend assistance at meetings of the Parties;
 - b) prepare common formats for use by the Parties, which would serve as a basis for notices and reports to the Ministerial Council, according to the provisions of Article 6 above;
 - c) distribute among the Parties material containing scientific, technical and educational information, with the assistance of the CRID and in collaboration with the specialized natural disaster organizations operating in the region;
 - d) formulate recommendations containing common guidelines and criteria in accordance with the provisions of Article 7 of the present Agreement;
 - e) elaborate and maintain updated directories and reports on technical studies, in collaboration with the specialized natural disaster organizations operating in the region;
 - f) co-ordinate activities with regional organizations which have as one of their objectives the prevention and mitigation of natural disasters;
 - g) establish mechanisms for the reproduction of reports of agencies and experiences of countries in the official languages of the ACS.

ARTICLE 11

Meetings of the Contracting Parties

The ordinary meetings of the Contracting Parties shall be held six (6) months prior to each Ordinary Meeting of the Ministerial Council and shall preferably coincide with the meetings of the Special Committee responsible for Natural Disasters. The Parties may hold extraordinary meetings, at the request of any of the Parties. Meetings shall follow the procedural norms of the

Ministerial Council specified in Article XI of the Convention and Agreement No. 9/95 and any other regulations approved by the Ministerial Council.

ARTICLE 12

Participants at Meetings of the Contracting Parties

To attend meetings, each Contracting Party shall appoint a representative authorized to take decisions on the management of natural disasters, who may be accompanied by other experts and designated advisers. To this end, each Party must notify the ACS Secretariat of the composition of its Delegation.

ARTICLE 13

Obligations

The Contracting Parties of the present Agreement undertake to:

- a. implement the present Agreement, in accordance with the actions, policies and programmes approved by the Ministerial Council, with regard to natural disasters, according to the provisions of paragraph a) of Article IX of the Convention;
- b. evaluate the measures for co-operation to be undertaken within the framework of the present Agreement, its appendices and/or amendments, including their financial and institutional implications;
- c. in the event that the activities to be undertaken involve the organs established by the Convention or by the Ministerial Council, the respective recommendations shall be presented for the consideration of the Ministerial Council, except when specific mandates have been approved by the Ministerial Council, in relation to the issue treated by the Contracting Parties;
- d. assess the effectiveness of measures adopted for natural disaster management and protection, including Highly Vulnerable Areas, and examine the need for additional measures, the aim of which would be to improve the level of co-operation in accordance with the present Agreement, in the form of Appendices to this Agreement;
- e. establish and revise, as required, the common guidelines and criteria, in accordance with the provisions of Article 7 above;
- f. approve by consensus the annual report that must be submitted to the Ministerial Council, in accordance with the provisions of Article 6 above;
- g. any other function related to the implementation of the present Agreement and those decided by the Ministerial Council;

ARTICLE 14

Effective Implementation of the Agreement

The Contracting Parties shall co-operate on the development and adoption of the measures required to facilitate the effective implementation of the present Agreement, in accordance with the rules of international law.

ARTICLE 15

Signature

This Agreement shall be open for signature as from the 17th day of the month of April, 1999, by any State, Country and Territory referred to in Article IV of the Convention, which has ratified or adhered to same.

ARTICLE 16

Ratification and Adherence

Ratification and adherence shall be conducted according to the procedure stipulated in Articles XXIII and XXVII of the Convention, respectively.

ARTICLE 17

Depositary

The instruments of ratification or adherence must be deposited with the Depositary Government for the Convention, the Government of the Republic of Colombia, and must comply with the procedure for notification stipulated in Article XXV of the Convention.

ARTICLE 18

Entry into Force

The present Agreement, once adopted by the Contracting Parties, shall come into effect in accordance with the procedure specified in Article XXVI of the Convention.

ARTICLE 19

Amendments

The present Agreement may be amended by consensus at Meetings of the Heads of State and/or Government or Meetings of the Ministerial Council of the ACS. The amendments shall enter into force thirty days after ratification by two thirds of the Member States.

ARTICLE 20

Interpretation and Resolution of Disputes

Doubts or disputes that might arise among the Contracting Parties concerning the application or interpretation of this Agreement, and which cannot be resolved by the Parties involved, shall be resolved by the Ministerial Council. In any case, the Convention shall prevail over this Agreement.

ARTICLE 21

Duration and Withdrawal

1. This Agreement shall remain in effect for an indefinite time, or for as long as the Convention remains valid.
2. Each Contracting Party may withdraw from this Agreement in accordance with the procedure established in Article XXX of the Convention.

ARTICLE 22

Reservations

This Agreement admits no reservations.

Prepared in Santo Domingo de Guzmán, Dominican Republic on the 17th day of the month of April, 1999, in a single document in the English, Spanish and French languages, all three texts being equally valid and authentic.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the duly authorized representatives sign the present Agreement.

SECTION 14: THE TAMPERE CONVENTION ON THE PROVISION OF TELECOMMUNICATION RESOURCES FOR DISASTER MITIGATION AND RELIEF OPERATIONS

- 1. Saint Lucia is a signatory to the Tampere Convention as per 20 April 2004, however it has no Definitive signature, ratification, accession, acceptance or approval in place.*
- 2. On January 1, 2005 the Tampere Convention came into being internationally.*

SECTION 15: MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE ORGANISATION OF EASTERN CARIBBEAN STATES WITH PUERTO RICO

The MOU between the OECS and Puerto Rico is a stand alone document and maybe obtained from the OECS Secretariat.