

CBRN CoE NEWSLETTER

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August, 2014



2014 National Focal Points Meeting held at
the Joint Research Centre, Ispra

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His Highness Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Attends
Opening of CoE Regional Secretariat

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World interest in the EU's CBRN CoE has once again increased. This was amply demonstrated during the opening of the latest of the CoE regional Secretariats in Abu Dhabi. Representatives from many countries, and not just those of the Gulf, were present to hear the words of His Highness Sheikh Saif bin Zayed, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior of the UAE, who attended the opening ceremony. In his words, "It is our duty towards our communities that have entrusted us to protect them and address the risks that threaten them".

We must also learn from what we are doing and in parallel to the project implementation work there is a raft of evaluation measures being undertaken to ensure good technical quality, value for money and to make sure that we meet the project objectives and satisfy the needs identified by the Partner Country.

In many aspects of the Initiative, communication is the key. Over this period

the second National Focal Point meeting was held in June at the European Commission's Joint Research centre in Italy. There we had the chance to meet again with colleagues from many parts of the CoE, to share both ideas and experiences and above all to learn from one another. The way forward was presented and new project ideas were generated. The aim is to further strengthen the network, to bring more partners to the initiative whilst broadening the focus of the work by discussing related topics; for example export control in dual use issues, countering terrorism, and health problems. The latest developments in Western Africa show the need to further reinforce the network on dealing with such important matters.

The risks are addressed in part by the determination and effort made not only by the Partner Countries National CBRN teams, led by their National Focal Point, the Regional Secretariats and the CoE team members in Europe, but also by the

myriad of project implementers working in so many different countries and cultures. All with the same aim, to complement national measures by building institutional capacity and a coordinated strategy for CBRN risk mitigation. Currently there are 40 projects taking place, involving 103 implementers in 65 countries. We have received over 100 project deliverables with more than 100 seminars and workshops having taken place. This level of effort will be sustained and as some projects are completed towards the end of this year, new ones will follow.

We have tried to bring you in this newsletter a snapshot of some of the work that is currently undertaken by so many people. For a fuller picture of what we are doing, please visit our website at www.cbrn-coe.eu or for those that are CoE registered members, please go to the portal.

Michael Thornton
JRC CBRN CoE Team Leader

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2014 Meeting of the CBRN National Focal Points

by Jean Pierre Bardoul

The European Commission's Joint Research Centre in Italy was the venue for this year's National Focal Points Meeting on 11 - 13 June 2014.

During the three-day event there was time to take stock of the state-of-play of the Initiative. This was done through formal presentations and discussions among the key stakeholders: the Partner Countries, the EC (DEVCO, JRC) and UNICRI. Furthermore, DEVCO used the opportunity to share with the NFPs its thinking about how to further use the Centres of Excellence (CoE) network to address other threats which are closely linked to CBRN.

Participants were welcomed to the Joint Research Centre (JRC) site in Ispra by Krzysztof Maruszewski, the director of the JRC Institute for Health and Consumer Protection. Mr Maruszewski informed that the JRC provides scientific and technologic advice to the Commission services, which serves as a basis for the conception and formulation of policies in various fields. Later, Stephan Lechner, the director of the JRC Institute for the Protection and Security of the Citizen (the institute that carries out a large amount of work on behalf of the CoE) gave a presentation of the work of his Institute.

Mr Adriaan van der Meer (EC) expressed satisfaction with the implementation of the EU CBRN initiative. A new legal basis – the Instrument contributing to Stability & Peace (IcSP) – is in place and funding is available for the next seven years (2014-2020). The challenge now is to further strengthen the Initiative: currently there are 47 formal partner countries, while some 20 to 25 countries have expressed interest in joining. The implementation of CBRN projects is well underway and new projects are in the pipeline. A number of countries have undertaken CBRN needs assessment exercises and are in the process of drafting CBRN risk mitigation national action plans. Five Regional Secretar-



Ali Gakweli giving a project update during the NFP meeting in Ispra, Italy.

iates (namely the African Atlantic Façade, Eastern and Central Africa, the Middle East, North Africa and South East Europe and Caucasus, Moldova and Ukraine) will be reinforced through providing long-term senior CBRN experts. Furthermore, van der Meer stressed the need to show results in order to ensure continued political support for the Initiative, as well as to step up communication and visibility efforts.

On behalf of the European External Action Service, Bruno Dupré also expressed satisfaction with the progress made under the EU CBRN CoE Initiative.

DG ECHO (Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection) gave a presentation on the new EU emergency response coordination centre (ERCC), (hosted by DG ECHO) which is tasked with facilitating and coordinating

Member States' (MS) response in case of disasters, including CBRN incidences. While civil protection remains the responsibility of MS themselves, the ERCC helps with assessing the needs and matches offers of assistance from Member States willing to help, with the needs expressed from the affected MS.

The Ispra site of the JRC houses 5 of the 7 JRC Institutes and employs over 1800 staff to carry out research in order to provide independent scientific advice and support to EU policy. Participants to the NFP meeting were given a demonstration of equipment used to detect nuclear radiation and radioactive materials at land border points, where vehicles/trucks pass. With funding from the IcSP, the JRC trains border officials from third countries, e.g. Ukraine, on the use of the detection

equipment for radioactive materials. Furthermore, a demonstration was given of the activities that the JRC is undertaking to test nuclear detection equipment (produced by commercial companies). The testing includes assessing the performance of equipment against international standards. Participants were given a tour of some of the JRC laboratories on the third day. [See p.19]

Aurélien Colson of the 'governance team' emphasised the bottom-up approach in the EU CBRN Centres of Excellence (CoE) Initiative. In the different thematic discussions on the third day, several challenges were highlighted. In terms of sustainability, it was emphasised that conditions conducive to sustainability include avoiding changes and rotation of government personnel, and institutionalising CBRN work within national institutions.

Another discussion mentioned that countries are at different levels of development and that this factor should be taken into account when dealing with regional cooperation. The sharing of information – often perceived as sensitive – needs further discussion. Regional 'pioneers' may be identified who could move ahead first and take others along. It was also noted that organisation of regional CBRN events in countries where progress needs to be encouraged is useful.

Finally, it was conceded that it was not uncommon for NFPs to have their own full-time job, and for whom the function of NFP constitutes additional work. As such, management training was seen as neces-



Colonel José Embang, National Focal Point of the Philippines.

sary for NFPs.

The meeting was seen as an all-round success, with many pertinent points raised by Partner Countries and the Initiative's implementers. It also served to create a platform from which scope for further improvement could be identified, whilst acknowledging the significant achievements of the initiative.

Round Table Meetings held during the NFP meeting

Comments from the Regional Coordinators

MIDDLE EAST: 5th RTM

Adil Radoini: "The round-table meeting of the Middle East NFPs was an opportunity to further complete the drafting of project 34+ (a project that will build on a project 34 Strengthening capacities in CBRN event response and in chemical and medical emergency) and discuss what can be improved in the implementation of the

CoE activities.

"The meeting was attended by official representatives of the Egyptian Radiological Regulatory Commission."

CENTRAL ASIA: 1st RTM

Fanny Fert: "This was the occasion for the 1st RTM for the Central Asia region to take place, and participants from the three partner countries of the region attended the meeting, namely the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan. In addition, other participants were a representative from Afghanistan and the President of the ECO Science Foundation from Pakistan.

"This 1st RTM allowed participants to address regional concerns, to present the current state of CBRN risk mitigation in their country, and discuss projects proposals as well as the current status of the initiative in the region.

"The countries identified common concerns that could lead to the formulation of regional projects. The participants expressed their interests in conducting the NAQ and NAP, and discussions in the next

Full details of this event can be found on the CoE website and portal.

- » <https://cbrn-coe.jrc.ec.europa.eu>
- » <http://www.cbrn-coe.eu/>



workshops will carry on in this regard."

SOUTH EAST ASIA: 8th RTM

Maria Rettori: "The Head of the Regional Secretariat, Mr. Oscar Valenzuela, chaired the event that was attended by the NFPs of Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam.

"The meeting focused on the discussion of the project proposal drafted by the European Commission as follow-up of the previous Round-Table Meeting of the South East Asia region.

"Regional cooperation via a possible ASEAN regional forum on CBRN matters was discussed, as was the export control programme of the EU."

EASTERN AND CENTRAL AFRICA: 4th RTM

The Eastern and Central African Round-Table Meeting drew members of the National Teams of Burundi, the DRC, Ghana, Kenya, Seychelles, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

In addition, and as with the previous Round-Table Meeting held in Uganda, there were participants representing Ethiopia and Madagascar, both potential Partner Countries in the initiative.

AFRICAN ATLANTIC FAÇADE: 6th RTM

Stefania Micucci: "NFPs from Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon, Liberia, Morocco, Senegal and Togo attended the meeting along with representative from Cameroon and Nigeria. This meeting was an opportunity to present the initiative to prospective partner countries and to finalize the drafting of two new project proposals."



NFP meeting participants visiting the SiLab in JRC Ispra, Italy.

More on the JRC Laboratories visited

ITRAP+10 laboratories:

These laboratories test performances of detection equipment (used in nuclear security) against international standards.

EUSECTRA:

The Centre provides theoretical and practical training in the field of detection of nuclear/radiological material and consequent first response.

3D-lab:

The laboratory performs R&D and support activities related to the development of systems for surveillance and tele-operation in advanced storage areas and plant design verification.

SiLab:

SiLab Nuclear Safeguards activities consist of the design, fabrication, testing and commissioning of tools used to seal containers holding nuclear materials.

Inauguration of Regional Secretariat for the GCC in Abu Dhabi

by Michael Thornton



Signature of the memorandum of understanding between Major General Ahmed Nasser Al Raisi (UAE) and Mr Jonathan Lucas (UNICRI) in the presence of His Highness. Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan (UAE) and Mr Maciej Popowski (EU). 18 June 2014 in Abu Dhabi, UAE.

"The challenges we face today are nothing like challenges we have seen in the past. We are all required to succeed."

The words of His Highness Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior of the UAE, during the opening ceremony of the latest regional secretariat of the EU CBRN Centres of Excellence.

The grand ballroom of the Jumeirah Hotel in Etihad Towers, Abu Dhabi was the venue for this grand event. The ceremony was attended by a significant number of ministers, ministries' undersecretaries, Arab and foreign diplomats, in addition

to representatives from GCC countries, senior Armed forces officers and VIPs.

HH Sheikh Saif went on to say that, "Today's challenges are incredibly complex and pressing; overcoming them requires unstinting and concerted efforts to ensure success".

He reiterated the UAE Government's keenness and commitment to provide all the requirements of success and leadership to strengthen the preventive aspect and address chemical, biological, radioactive and nuclear (CBRN) risks with advanced scientific methods according to international best practices.

Maciej Popowski, deputy secretary general of the EU external action service (EEAS) stated in his speech that the set-

ting up of a secretariat in Abu Dhabi, "will act as a focal point for regional CBRN activities [...] and the inauguration is only the start of the process."

Many people felt the effects of Chernobyl and Fukushima and the recent MERS virus demonstrates that CBRN risks are not constrained to a countries borders. "Gulf counterparts are here," Mr Popowski said.

"Partners who join see that value of regional cooperation to combat risks which do not respect borders. The EU and UAE and other Gulf partners are looking at practical ways to cooperate in relation to CBRN risks. We take each other seriously as partners in this domain."

Dr. Jonathan Lucas (Director of

UNICRI) delivered a speech, by which he said that the initiative involves forty-five countries working in eight regions under one umbrella.

"Even in difficult times, this reminds us that the power to transform our world lies in dialogue, mutual trust and cooperation." At the end of the ceremony, HH Sheikh Saif attended the signing of the agreement to establish the Regional Secretariat of the Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Centres of Excellence (CoE) Risk Mitigation in Abu Dhabi. The agreement was signed by Major General Ahmed Nasser Al Raisi, Director General of Central Operations on behalf of the UAE and Dr. Jonathan Lucas, Director, UNICRI, on behalf of the Regional Secretariat of the Centres of Excellence.

The Centres of Excellence initiative is based on a voluntary, bottom-up approach responding to the interests of all the partners. The next step will include a reinforcement of regional contacts and national efforts to combat CBRN risks.

In the words of H.H. Sheikh Saif, "It is our duty towards our communities that have entrusted us to protect them and address the risks that threaten them. These efforts are mandatory to ensure further progress and achieve human prosperity across the globe."



Mr Maciej Popowski, Deputy Secretary General of the EEAS, speaking at the inauguration.



Participants at the inauguration of the Regional Secretariat for the GCC countries. Abu Dhabi, UAE.

Gulf Cooperation Council Countries and Middle East

by Adil Radoini



The newly opened Regional Secretariat building for the Gulf Cooperation Council countries.

Round Table Meeting for the GCC countries

Following the opening of the Regional Secretariat (see previous page), on 19 June a regional round table meeting for the GCC countries was held at the Emirates palace. The meeting was attended by the representatives of the GCC countries and by Dr Lucas, Mr. Marelli (UNICRI), Mr Michael Thornton (JRC), Mr Adil Radoini (UNICRI) and Mr Yulian Tsolov (JRC). On 19th June a visit to the new Secretariat was also organized by the Abu Dhabi Police. It is expected to be fully operational soon.

the Head of Delegation to Lebanon and the EC from Brussels. A meeting between the representatives of the EU and the Prime Minister was held before the ceremony. In the afternoon a meeting between the NFP, Dr. Bilal Nsouli and the implementers of project 34, was held with the aim of defining important aspects of the implementation in Lebanon. The event showed strong political support for the initiative by the Lebanese government.



Needs Assessment Questionnaire workshop with the Iraqi National CBRN Team, 20-22 May

A Needs Assessment Questionnaire Workshop was held from 20-22 May in Amman. The workshop was attended by Joint Research Centre (JRC) experts and the Iraqi National Team. The completed questionnaire is currently with the representatives of Iraq.



Iraqi National Team members discussing the Needs Assessment Questionnaire. Amman, Jordan.

Middle East News

Visibility event in Lebanon, 4 April

An official ceremony under the aegis of the Prime Minister of Lebanon was held in Beirut on 4 April 2014 to launch project n. 34. The EU was represented by

African Atlantic Façade

by Stefania Micucci



1er anniversaire du Bureau régional pour la Façade Atlantique Africaine. Rabat, Maroc.

Regional meetings

Premier anniversaire du Bureau régional pour la Façade Atlantique Africaine et 5^{ème} table ronde

Dans le cadre de l'initiative des Centres d'Excellence (CdE) de l'Union Européenne (UE) pour la réduction des risques Nucléaires, Radiologiques, Biologiques et Chimiques (NRBC) une rencontre de haut niveau a eu lieu à Rabat le 15 Avril 2014. Elle réunissait des représentants du Royaume du Maroc (Ministère des Affaires étrangères et de la coopération, Ministère de l'Intérieur et Direction générale de la protection civile), de l'Union européenne (Délégation de l'UE au Maroc, Commission Européenne - CE), des Nations unies (UNICRI) et des pays partenaires ainsi que les points focaux nationaux de la Façade Atlantique Africaine.

Il s'agissait de célébrer le premier anniversaire de l'ouverture du Bureau régional et lancer la cinquième table ronde des points focaux nationaux.

Suite aux célébrations, les points focaux nationaux de la Façade Atlantique Africaine, accompagnés d'experts nationaux ont participé à cette cinquième table ronde, organisée par le Bureau régional à Rabat, Maroc.

A cette occasion les points focaux et experts nationaux, le Bureau régional et la Commission européenne ont posé les bases de la rédaction de nouveaux projets régionaux.

Bilateral meetings

Cameroun

Suite à la participation de S.E M. Mouhamadou Youssifou, ambassadeur du Cameroun au Maroc, à l'occasion des célébrations du 1^{er} anniversaire du Bureau

régional pour la Façade Atlantique Africaine et celle de Mr Janvier Alima Atangana, représentant du Ministère des relations extérieures, à la réunion des points focaux nationaux qui s'est déroulée en Juin à Ispra, en Italie, une série de rencontres avec les autorités nationales a été organisée du 8 au 10 Juillet 2014 à Yaoundé.

Les officiels de plusieurs institutions, telles que les ministères des relations extérieures, de la protection civile et de la défense se sont entretenus avec les coordinatrices régionales de la Façade Atlantique Africaine et de l'Afrique Centrale et Orientale.

Ces discussions visaient à présenter l'initiative des CdE CBRN au pays et à vérifier son intérêt à devenir pays partenaire.

Les interlocuteurs camerounais, y compris Mr Désiré J.C. Owono Menguele, Ministre plénipotentiaire du Cameroun auprès de l'ONU, ont montré un vif intérêt pour l'initiative et ont demandé des infor-

REGIONS

mations sur les modalités nécessaires à la formalisation de l'engagement. Cette visite fut également l'occasion pour les coordinatrices régionales de rencontrer la délégation de l'UE ainsi que la coordinatrice résidente des Nations unies. Tous ont exprimé leur soutien à l'initiative.

Benin

Benin officially became a partner country of the CBRN CoE Initiative on 20 March 2014. Ms Afiavi Fernande Houngbéji, Director of International Organisations at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been nominated as the National Focal Point.

Nigeria

Following the attendance of a representative of Nigeria to the NFP meeting held in Ispra in June, a series of meetings with Nigerian authorities is planned for September 2014. They will have as an objective the presentation of the Initiative as a first step for this potential partner country.

NAQ and NAP



Côte d'Ivoire

The CBRN Needs Assessment Questionnaire workshop was organised in Grand-Bassam, Côte d'Ivoire on 2-4 June under the auspices of the Ministry of Environment, Urban Sanitation and Sustainable Development.

Representatives from various ministries, together with the national CBRN team under the leadership of the NFP, Mr Kadder Touré and European Commission experts, came together to discuss and obtain a consensus on the questions posed by the Needs Assessment Questionnaire.

The outcome of the meeting was the production of a document summarising the identified gaps and several recommendations in order to strengthen CBRN risk mitigation in Côte d'Ivoire.

This needs assessment was used for the National Action Plan workshop organised on 30 June and 1 July 2014. The Côte d'Ivoire national CBRN team, together with UNICRI experts conducted the first workshop on drafting the CBRN National Action Plan (NAP) using the NAQ results obtained previously.

Gabon

The first drafting workshop for the CBRN National Action Plan of Gabon was held in Libreville on 3 and 4 July 2014. Hosted by the Ministry of the Interior, it gathered the members of the national team and UNICRI experts to discuss CBRN risks and mitigation strategies.



Côte d'Ivoire National Action Plan workshop.

South East Asia

by Maria Rettori



NAP Workshop in Brunei-Darussalam.

National Action Plan In-country workshops

A National CBRN Action Plan is an essential instrument to ensure that various and separate efforts are incorporated into one coherent approach to strengthen national CBRN capacities for risk and emergency response.

Within this framework, the following activities were undertaken in the region:

- Visit of UNICRI experts to Cambodia and the Philippines to meet CBRN working groups (March 2014)
- 1st NAP workshop with the National CBRN Team and stakeholders of Myanmar (May 2014)
- 2nd NAP workshop with the National CBRN Team and stakeholders of Brunei Darussalam (May 2014) – this workshop benefitted in particular from the presence of the IAEA
- Final workshop on NAP with the National CBRN Team and stakeholders of Cambodia (June 2014).

Two workshops with the CBRN stakeholders of Lao PDR and Viet Nam, took place on the 14 and 25 of March 2014 respectively.

At these workshops, the NFPs presented the status of the CBRN CoE projects in their countries, while the Regional Coordinator presented the current status of CBRN CoE in South East Asia, as well as the methodology and cycle of activities.

International Co-operation

Visit of the OPCW to the Regional Secretariat, Manila, the Philippines, 5 March 2014

Mr. Pankaj Sharma of the OPCW visited the CBRN Centre of Excellence (CoE) Regional Secretariat.

Information was exchanged regarding the activities implemented both by OPCW and the CBRN CoE Regional Secretariat. As the first step of the collaboration between OPCW and the Regional Secretariat for Southeast Asia, Mr. Sharma expressed OPCW's interest to participate as an observer in the 7th National Focal Points Round Table Meeting (held at a later date).



Round Table Meeting in Brunei Darussalam.

Interpol Chemical and Explosives Terrorism Prevention Course, Phuket, Thailand, 17-20 June 2014

The Regional Coordinator for South East Asia was invited to participate and discuss the CBRN Centre of Excellence - South East Asia in the Chemical and Explosives Terrorism Prevention Conference held in Thailand. The event drew a wide range of participants, including experts from the region, Interpol, and the OPCW. The Chemical and Explosives Terrorism Prevention Conference of Interpol was a great venue to widen the perspective of the SEA region on counter-terrorism. It was an opportunity to exchange ideas and create connections for future collaborations with partner countries and international organizations.

Round Table Meeting

The 7th CBRN CoE National Focal Points Round-Table Meeting for South East Asia took place at the International Convention Centre in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam, 2-3 April 2014

Participants from Partner Countries in the region, namely Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam, together with representatives from the EU, UNICRI and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) met for this round table.

The meeting offered an opportunity to take stock of the progress made within the initiative, discuss ideas for improvement of regional and international cooperation and identify new areas for technical cooperation through new project ideas.



A recent edition of Pan European Networks, from May 2014, highlights the EU CBRN CoE initiative and its efforts to promote safety and security in the field of CBRN. The article touches upon key features of the initiative, such as its bottom-up approach, its emphasis on voluntary participation of Partner Countries with the purpose of complementing national measures, and its aim to ultimately create a mutually beneficial arrangement between the EU and Partner Countries to exchange knowledge, expertise and best practices. The Needs Assessment process, through which in-country needs in the field of CBRN safety and capacity building are systematically identified, is also discussed as a cornerstone of the CBRN CoE initiative. The article calls upon the need for regional cooperation as a prerequisite for promoting security in the field of CBRN, and the need for continuing to foster networks and to exchange knowledge.



Oscar Valenzuela receiving a plaque from Dato Hamdan Abu Bakar (Permanent Secretary at Prime Minister's Office).

Central Asia

by Fanny Fert



Central Asia Round Table Meeting participants at JRC site, Ispra, Italy.

Bilateral meeting

Bilateral meeting with Uzbekistan, 6-8 May 2014, Tashkent

A bilateral meeting was held with officials from the State Inspection "Sanoatgeokontekhnazorat" mandated by the Cabinet of Ministers to be the host institution of the Regional Secretariat, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan, and the National Coordinating Unit (NCU) of the European Union's Technical Assistance Programme under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The purpose of the meeting was to finalize the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Uzbekistan and UNICRI, framing the establishment of the Regional Secretariat in Tashkent.

The negotiations with the Uzbek MFA were fruitful and progress was made towards the opening of the Regional Secretariat.

International events

Tbilisi, Georgia, 26-28 March 2014

The Biosafety Association for Central Asia and the Caucasus (BACAC) hosted the 5th Annual Conference: "BACAC: Present and Future" in Tbilisi, Georgia, on 26-28 March 2014.

This conference was the opportunity to have an overview of the activities undertaken in Central Asia in terms of Biosafety. It was also the occasion to meet and discuss with different stakeholders from

Central Asia and to promote the EU CBRN CoE Initiative. Representatives of the partner countries of the CoE Central Asia Secretariat took an active part in the different sessions of the event.

Vienna, Austria, 8 -11 April 2014

The OSCE, jointly with the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), held a series of meetings on 7-11 April 2014 in Vienna, Austria, on matters related to the practical implementation of UNSC Resolution 1540 (2004). This event gathered representatives of International sub-regional and regional Organizations (IRO).

This conference was the opportunity for staff/experts from IROs to have a comprehensive exchange and address some important issues related to the UNSCR 1540 implementation and CBRN risk mitigation in general. Wolfgang Lehofer, (from DEVCO) and Renaud Chatelus (from JRC) represented the European Commission; also in attendance was the regional coordinator Fanny Fert.



Round Table Meeting in Ispra.

Eastern and Central Africa

by Alma Pintol



Announcement of bilateral meeting in Burundi.

Bilateral Meetings

Burundi National Team meeting 23-24 April 2014, Bujumbura, Burundi

Following its official nomination (March 2014), the Burundi National CBRN Team held its first meeting in April. The meeting, opened by the representatives of the Ministry of External Relations and International Cooperation provided an occasion to present the team with the basic principles of the CBRN Centres of Excellence Initiative and provide an update on its most recent developments.

The meeting ended with several recommendations, most important of which were to:

- continue working on raising awareness on CBRN with general public and decision makers,
- support implementation of international conventions and ratified and adopted laws,
- identify main CBRN risks in the country,
- strengthen the coordination of legal

and administrative frameworks at the national and regional levels, and

- support and complement national emergency plans and disseminate best practices in the CBRN field.

During this visit to Bujumbura, the regional coordinators for ECA and AAF also met with Hon. Albert Shingiro, Principal Secretary of the Ministry of External Relations and International Cooperation who re-iterated Burundi's commitment to the Initiative.

CBRN Needs Assessment

✓ Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo, 28-30 April 2014

The Congolese CBRN experts and the NFP, Edouard Booto, gathered with EC experts in order to assess DRC's needs in the area of CBRN risk mitigation. The workshop was formally opened through speeches from officials representing the Ministry of Higher and University Education and Scientific Research, Mr. Iyeli and

Mr. Bukassa. Ms. Roberta Del Giudice, from the EU delegation, also addressed the audience.

In the course of this 3-day intensive workshop which brought together about 60 participants, the DRC participants actively and enthusiastically engaged in completing the questionnaire. The EC experts support was welcomed and on many occasions led to lively discussions between the various stakeholders. This exercise allowed for establishing a clear picture of the status of DRC in terms of CBRN risk mitigation, and identified areas requiring strengthening.

✓ Kampala, Uganda, 2-4 June 2014

The Ugandan NAQ Meeting, brought together national and EU experts who discussed good practice and possible gaps in Uganda's preparedness for CBRN events.

The next steps will involve the prioritisation of the needs identified in the meeting, and the elaboration of a national action plan by the Ugandan experts.

National Action Plan

8-9 May 2014, Nairobi, Kenya

Upon the request of the Kenyan National Team, a workshop was organized in the Regional Secretariat in Nairobi dedicated to the first stage of drafting of the National Action Plan. Results of the previously completed Needs Assessment Questionnaire were used as a basis and were presented by the National Focal Point.

The meeting convened representatives from different Kenyan ministries/entities including, amongst others, the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs and International Trade, as well as from the University of Nairobi. Potential risk scenarios were presented to the Kenyan National CBRN Team and their relevance to the national situation was discussed. The two-day event was concluded with a brief summary, discussion of action points and a work plan for all stakeholders that will lead up to the second workshop, as well as key risks for the further work.

Regional Meetings

5-6 May 2014, Kampala, Uganda

The National Focal Points from the Eastern and Central Africa region, together with national experts, met in Kampala, Uganda, to attend the Third round table meeting organized by the Regional Secretariat, in collaboration with the Government of Uganda.

It was an opportunity for the National Focal Points, the national experts, the Regional Secretariat and the European Commission to talk about the needs as-



Participants in the National Action Plan workshop in Nairobi, Kenya.

essment process, national action plan and regional priorities.

The National Focal Point of the nine partner countries (Burundi, the DRC, Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, Seychelles, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia) provided updates on

the current activities in their countries in mitigation of the CBRN risks. Representatives of Ethiopia and Madagascar greeted the opportunity to attend the meeting and provide their input for the chemical project that was being drafted.



Members engaging in the 3rd Round Table Meeting in Kampala, Uganda.

Project news

by Fanny Ewann

In January 2014, 30 CBRN CoE projects belonging to the initiative's early round of funding entered their last year of implementation. As a result, project activities are in full swing and more events are scheduled over the rest of the year in most CoE regions. Below are highlighted some events which have taken place over the past three to four months.

PROJECT 5



Knowledge development and transfer of best practice on CBRN import/export monitoring

The German Federal Office of Economic and Export Control (BAFA) held a four-day long seminar in May for stakeholders from four regions covered by the project: African Atlantic Façade, Central Asia, Middle East and North Africa. The seminar marked an important milestone of the project that is set to conclude in December 2014.

PROJECT 7



Guidelines, procedures and standardisation on bio-safety/bio-security

From 16-30 June implementers of Project 7 organised a workshop in Manila and Muntinlupa City, Philippines. The object was to assist medical laboratories to become compliant with ISO standards and Biorisk Management Systems. These standards provide recommendations and advice regarding medical laboratory



Project 7 award ceremony at the Presidential palace. Manila, the Philippines.

service, collection of patient samples, interpretation of test results all within acceptable turnaround times. Furthermore, the standards provide guidance on how testing should be provided in a medical emergency and the laboratories role in the education and training of health care staff.

Dr. Siripan Wongwanich, from the Ministry of Public Health of Thailand, supervised the training. The workshop was for staff from the Research Institute for Tropical Medicine and the University of the Philippines in Manila, to understand the requirements of ISO standards and to learn how to prepare documents in compliance with these standards and how to carry out onsite internal audits of the laboratory quality management system. The attendees received their training certificates during the workshop's closing ceremony in the presence of Chancellor Manuel B. Agulto of the University of the Philippines Manila, members of the Regional Secretariat, and the NFP.

PROJECT 13



Capacity building and raising awareness for identifying and responding to threats from CBRN materials in Sub-Saharan African countries

In order to promote a culture of CBRN safety and security, an intensive four-day course given by European experts to representatives from eight Eastern and Central Africa partner countries, Burundi, DRC, Ghana, Kenya, Seychelles, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia, and one potential partner country South Sudan took place in Kampala, Uganda between 30 June and 3 July. The participants were provided with a comprehensive introduction to the risks posed by CBRN materials at the global and regional level covering the entire spectrum from emergency preparedness to response. As a follow-up to the seminar,

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the implementing consortium will organise two tailored seminars to focus on the national needs and concerns of participating countries and promote the adoption of a CBRN action plan in these countries.

PROJECT 18



International Network of universities and institutes for raising awareness on dual-use concerns in biotechnology

This project aims at reinforcing a culture of bio-safety and bio-security through the building of a sustainable network of universities and institutes spread over 20 countries. Within this project a series of 11 seminars on awareness-raising of dual-use in bio-technology have been organised in various partner countries between March and June 2014. Jordan, Pakistan, Morocco, Moldova, Ukraine, Lebanon hosted these seminars in several universities with the goal of sharing knowledge amongst an international group of academics, researchers and students..

PROJECT 23



Building capacity to identify and respond to threats from chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear substances

Over the past few months national workshops were organised in three different CoE regions: South East Asia (2-8 Apr), Middle East (15-19 Jun) and African Atlantic Façade (23-27 Jun). These workshops were used to consolidate the participants'



Iraqi experts trained by Project 23 implementers (Nigel Tottie and Andrew Proudlove). Amman, Jordan.

knowledge of CBRN threat response. A dozen experts from various governmental organisation and institutions attended these events that were hosted by the countries themselves (Phnom Pen, Cambodia; Dakar, Senegal) and in the case of the Iraqi experts, by the Middle East Scientific Institute for Security in Amman, Jordan.

The courses were organised in two stages:

- to build a strong theoretical base for the identification and response of threats from Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear substances,
- to transpose the theory into practice by developing real case studies of CBRN agent deployment, and consequently hypothetical threat scenarios applicable to national critical infrastructure.

Participants discussed the pros and cons of different strategic response options to a variety of threats, before finally producing a blueprint based on the emergency

response team capabilities, taking into consideration other factors that could influence a response plan, i.e. climate, demographics and nature of threat. These dynamic, interactive courses highlighted the fact that risks exist at all levels. In each instance the workshop led to fruitful discussions regarding risk mitigation in the national context. Following the course, training certificates were awarded to all participants.

PROJECT 30



Network of Excellence for Nuclear Forensics in South East Asia Region

A workshop on nuclear forensics hosted by the Vietnam Agency for Radiation and Nuclear Safety took place on 3-5 Jun in Hanoi, Vietnam. It brought together

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regional experts on non-proliferation nuclear forensics and focused on the activities to be undertaken in the early stages of a nuclear forensic investigation, i.e. after detection of illicit nuclear or other radioactive material.

This event jointly organised in cooperation with the US Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration included technical presentations, group discussions and a significant part of hands-on training using portable measurement instruments.

PROJECT 33



Strengthening the national CBRN



Project 33: table-top exercise in Burundi.

legal framework and provision of specialized and technical training to enhance CBRN preparedness and response capabilities

During their second visit to Burundi on 7-8 Jul and Uganda on 10-11 Jul the implementers made use of table-top exercises. During both events, the experts were invited to discuss, through these exercises, the national response capabilities to different incident scenarios built on reported realities and challenges. On the second day, two thematic workshops were held to debate the existing legal and administrative frameworks on one hand, and training and equipment currently available to CBRN responders on the other. These events highlighted priorities for action within the framework of Project 33. Group dialogue and exchanges of experiences and expertise demonstrated a high level of commitment from both Burundian and Ugandan experts and collaboration with their European colleagues, in meeting the challenges related to CBRN issues in their country.

PROJECT 34



Strengthening capacities in CBRN event response and in chemical and medical emergency

From 26-28 May, the implementers met in Beirut and Amman the representatives of Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq involved in the project to present the work packages and to adapt the actions to the needs of each



Project 35: visit of laboratory facilities in Gabon.

partner country.

PROJECT 35



Management of hazardous chemical and biological waste in the African Atlantic Façade region and Tunisia

Project 35 was officially launched on 14 April in Rabat, Morocco. In phase 1, inventories of chemical and biological hazardous waste, hazardous biological agents and detection equipment are taking place in the participating countries. The goal is to clearly define in each country what the challenges and needs are.

In June and July those inventories have been conducted in Togo, Gabon and Liberia and will continue during the coming months in the other participating countries. These 3-day visits have provided opportunities for each participating country to identify and catalogue substances, structures, sites and facilities presenting risks related to chemical and biological waste management.

Communication Tools of the CBRN CoE

by Melissa Mouthaan

Supporting transnational communications is at the heart of the CoE initiative. By supporting communication across the CBRN CoE network and between Regional Secretariats, we ensure that lessons learnt at CoE meetings, shared by CBRN experts, and gathered through project results, are disseminated and available for access by all members of the initiative. One of the key pillars of the communications strategy is the private portal, which constitutes a secure repository of information and knowledge gained since the start of the CoE in 2010.

The Portal was designed with a view to being the primary gateway for all information, updates and news relating to the CBRN CoE initiative. As a user-registered domain, it offers a secure platform

hosted by the EC's Joint Research Centre for members to access information relevant to their activities and involvement in CBRN risk mitigation.

The portal is a private domain where registered members can both share information as well as access information, relating to CBRN risk mitigation in the respective regions. While managed by the CBRN CoE team of the Joint Research Centre, users are actively encouraged to manage their own Regional pages and to upload content that may be of relevance or interest to other participants in the initiative. In this way, one of the lasting legacies of the initiative will be the Portal itself: an online database of information and an active network relating to CBRN risk mitigation.

What are the key features of the Portal?

Agenda & Documents

The Portal houses an agenda and documents archive, allowing users to monitor events happening in the framework of the CoE initiative, and to access documents relating to: meetings and conferences; CoE projects; CBRN press articles; CoE methodology (including the Needs Assessment Questionnaire).

Databases

Databases on the portal provide users with contact details for:

- Experts in Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear fields;
- National Teams in place in Partner Countries;
- Partner Organisations working in the CBRN field;

Projects

The Projects page allows users to view information on all the projects that are being implemented under the CoE initiative, currently forty.

The Project Analysis Tool is an interactive tool that allows the user to search for projects according to different filters such as technical area and/or region.

News

The CoE News section of the Portal allows users to remain up-to-date on recent events and meetings that have taken place. The news regularly features pictures from events and project highlights in the different regions. Project implementers and regional coordinators are encouraged



FURTHER HIGHLIGHTS

to update their pages with news articles in order for project successes to be highlighted, and for lessons learnt to be shared.

Regional Secretariats

The regional pages are one of the key features of the Portal. They act as self-contained platforms, with regional agendas, project pages relating to the region, and news archives.

The regional pages are primarily run and managed by the regions themselves, with the CoE offering technical support when needed.

These platforms offer the opportunity for the regional coordinators to work with the National Teams and project implementers in their regions and to autonomously decide what information they would like to highlight and/or disseminate.

Such information can take the form of generic CBRN news articles, project-related news, meeting updates and outcomes, and any other documentation that may be relevant to the initiative.

Additional Information

The portal now features content in four languages: English, French, Russian, and, more recently, Arabic.

Users can now access key information and documents, such as the Needs Assessment Questionnaire and the CoE Overview, in their preferred language, whilst navigating the portal's menu options in this language.

NAQ Updates

by George Vardoulakis

Outputs and results from the NAQ are already being recognised by both Partner Countries and the European Commission as an important step in establishing a firm baseline and measure of a country's CBRN related needs, as well as its current capability and capacity in CBRN risk mitigation.

NAQ Workshops

To date, 14 NAQ Partner Country Workshops have taken place with the invitation of European Commission Chemical, Biological and Radiological-Nuclear experts. The EC experts provide independent technical support for the National NAQ workshop and pass no judgement on the answers themselves. The NAQ must be a bottom-up exercise, led by the Partner Country and as objective as possible free from political, professional or institutional bias.

Typically, over an intensive 3-day workshop, experts from all key national agencies and institutions, as well as other stakeholders identified by the National Focal Points (NFPs), gather to discuss and complete the NAQ. Although reaching a consensus on answers can prove challenging, the different technical and professional perspectives and experiences supplied by experts from different agencies has the advantage of providing a more comprehensive response. Indeed, the different points of view and interpretations of the questions serve to stimulate a thorough debate and complete analysis of the issues at hand. In addition, bringing together different national agencies and institutions, and gathering their diverse CBRN knowledge, helps to enable the NFP to identify – and ultimately prioritise – national needs.

The presence of European Commission experts supports the harmonisation of NAQ workshops in different partner countries by facilitating a common un-

derstanding of the NAQ questions, and by providing technical guidance and lessons learnt from previous NAQs. This approach could later help facilitate an inter-regional needs analysis, at the request of partner countries themselves, to enable common needs to be addressed through regional project proposals. Round tables would then provide the perfect forum for partner countries to exchange findings from the NAQ exercise. This type of technical exchange would further support the creation of an environment of inter-regional collaboration and trust that cements the ties of the network established by the CoE.

From NAQ to NAP

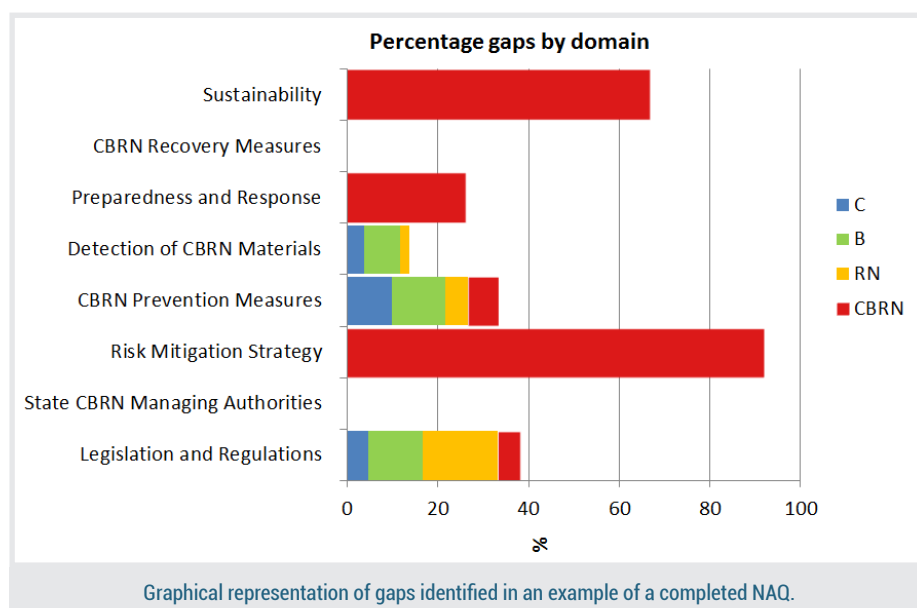
Outputs from the NAQ may also be used in the creation of National Action Plans (NAP). Just like with the NAQ, NAP workshops will also be coordinated by the NFP and supported by the same national agencies and the National CBRN team (NT). EC Experts will again be available to provide technical support as well as providing a NAP template. The structure of the NAP mirrors that of the NAQ, ensuring a one-to-one match between identified

gaps and the proposed remedial actions, tasks and activities.

NAQ Data Analysis

Data entered into the NAQ can be easily extracted by the Partner Country for analysis, as well as a numerical and graphical representation of the results. The chart shows an example extract of a completed NAQ: the distribution of gaps by section, domain and technical area is easily presented and ordered for setting priorities. Capacities can be plotted in a similar way.

An in-depth analysis of the data and information entered into the NAQ requires a careful understanding of how the NAQ sections and questions are structured and interpreted by the different institutions and experts involved. This is a key task for the NFP, in order to establish an objective and comprehensive national baseline, as well as for later developing a National Action Plan. The NAQ therefore sets an objective and robust foundation on which to build the subsequent elements needed for national CBRN risk mitigation. It is, in short, the cornerstone activity of the initiative.



First anniversary of the establishment of the SEC Regional Secretariat in Tbilisi, Georgia

This milestone was reached on the 18th July 2014 and was duly celebrated by an official ceremony hosted by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia.

The event raised awareness of the activities carried out by the Regional Secretariat to Georgian stakeholders and representatives of diplomatic missions and international organizations. The ceremony was opened with the speech by the Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs and Chairman of Interagency Coordination board for the fight against CBRN hazards, H.E. Levan Izoria. He expressed gratitude towards the EU and all the organizations which participated in the foundation of the Secretariat. Speeches were also given by the Deputy Head of the Delegation of the EU to Georgia, H.E. Boris Iarochévitch, and Dr. Francesco Marelli from UNICRI.

The activities implemented by the Regional Secretariat during the last year were presented by Mr. Givi Amiranashvili, Head of the Regional Secretariat. This was followed by a demonstration of the

response to a simulated chemical attack by the Emergency Management Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia (see figure).



Demonstration of response to a simulated chemical attack.

Upcoming Events

27-28 Oct. 2014

Heads of Regional Secretariat meeting – Brussels, Belgium

11-12 Nov. 2014

3rd Round Table Meeting for North Africa Region – Algiers, Algeria

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About CoE

The EU Centres of Excellence on Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Risk Mitigation (CBRN CoE Initiative), launched in 2010, is an initiative of the European Union (EU).

The initiative addresses the mitigation of and preparedness against risks related to CBRN material and agents. The origin of these risks can be criminal, accidental or natural. The Initiative seeks to boost cooperation at regional and international levels, and to develop a common and coherent CBRN risk mitigation policy at the regional level. Risk mitigation comprises prevention, preparedness and post-crisis management.

The initiative is implemented and funded by the European Commission (DG DEVCO) in cooperation with the Joint Research Centre (EC), the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) and a governance team. The European External Action Service (EEAS) is providing a strategic overview. The Initiative is implemented with the technical support of relevant experts from EU Member States, International Organisations and other experts.

For more information visit CBRN CoE website at: www.cbrn-coe.eu or send us an e-mail at: cbrn-coe@jrc.ec.europa.eu

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