

# CBRN NEWSLETTER

Created by the European Commission - Volume 19 - October 2023

## Making the world a safer place: EU CBRN CoE advances regional and interregional cooperation in CBRN risk mitigation

Pablo Plaza Jiménez



The European Union (EU) Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) Centres of Excellence (CoE) goes from strength to strength in building a trusted global network of cooperation in the field of CBRN risk mitigation. Launched in 2010, the EU CBRN CoE is putting emphasis on the best practices and lessons learned over 10 years' experience to continue bolstering international knowledge-sharing and cooperation across the Initiative's 64 partner-country and 8 regions network.

As the EU CBRN CoE's 9th International Meeting of the National Focal Points (14 – 15 June 2023, Brussels) showed, CoE Partner Countries are increasingly engaging in regional and inter-regional activities to tackle together CBRN risks, which know no borders. This year's edition spotlighted the progress made in the implementation of the Interregional CBRN CoE Roadmap, as well as the synergies with other complementary CBRN programs implemented by international partners. In a conference programme filled with insightful thematic sessions, such panels were highly valued by the participants.



EU CBRN CoE 9th International meeting of the National Focal Points, 14-15 June 2023, Brussels, Belgium.

The strengthening of the CoE global network of cooperation would not be possible without the unwavering support of the main global actors in CBRN risk mitigation. The high-level annual event brought together over 150 participants from the CoE network, EU institutions and Member States, the United States, Canada, and various United Nations offices and programmes.

The Success Stories from the CoE network awarded in this year's International Meeting also pointed out the high value of an increasing cooperation between the Initiative's Partner Countries and regions.

Awarded in the first place, the Success Story 'Lao PDR, Philippines: Country-to-country training in Southeast Asia strengthens implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention', demonstrated how country-to-country cooperation and regional expertise can drive the design and delivery of training that strengthens the national implementation of international legal instruments and conventions dedicated to CBRN risk mitigation.

To discover the most inspiring Success Stories supporting CBRN risk mitigation across the CoE network, see page 6 or scan the QR code above this page's photo.

## HIGHLIGHTS from the CBRN CoE's 8 Regions



**Nigeria becomes new CoE  
Partner Country**



**New training advances  
prosecution, adjudication  
of CB crimes**



**Regional Secretariat for Southeast  
Asia celebrates 10th anniversary**

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**TABLE OF COMMON ACRONYMS:** AAF = African Atlantic Façade; BWC = Biological Weapons Convention; CA = Central Asia; CBRN = Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear; CoE = Centres of Excellence; EC = European Commission; ECA = Eastern and Central Africa; EU = European Union; EUROPOL = European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation; FPI = Service for Foreign Policy Instruments, European Commission; GCC = Gulf Cooperation Council; IAEA = International Atomic Energy Agency; IMB = Bundeswehr Institute of Microbiology, Germany; INTERPOL = International Criminal Police Organization; ISEMI = International Security and Emergency Management Institute, Slovakia; ISTC = International Science and Technology Center; LAS = League of Arab States; JRC = Joint Research Centre, European Commission; MIE = Middle East; NAQ = Needs Assessment Questionnaire; NAP = National Action Plan; NAS = North Africa and Sahel; NFP = National Focal Point; OPCW = Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons; OSA = On-site Assistance Expert; RIVM = Dutch National Institute for Public Health and the Environment, Netherlands; RTM = Round Table Meeting; SCJS = Sustainable Criminal Justice Solutions; STCU = Science and Technology Center in Ukraine; SEA = Southeast Asia; SEEE = South East and Eastern Europe; TTT = Train-the-Trainer; TTX = Table Top Exercise; UKHSA = United Kingdom Health Security Agency; UN = United Nations; UNICRI = United Nations Interregional Crime Justice and Research Institute; UNOCT = United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism; UNODA = United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs; VERTIC = Verification Research, Training and Information Centre, United Kingdom; WHO = World Health Organisation; WMD = Weapons of Mass Destruction.

# New partner country Nigeria joins the EU CBRN CoE

North Africa and Sahel Regional Secretariat

The EU CBRN Centres of Excellence (CoE) welcomed the Federal Republic of Nigeria as new Partner Country to the Initiative in 2022, within the North Africa and Sahel (NAS) Regional Secretariat. The new CoE network member appointed Ms Pamela West, Nuclear Security Officer for the National Security Adviser in Nigeria, as the country's CoE National Focal Point (NFP).

Nigeria has come a long way in CBRN risk mitigation before officially joining the EU CBRN CoE. The now CoE Partner Country was visited by four CoE experts in 2016 to introduce the need for Nigeria to join the Initiative. Thereafter, the country accepted to join the initiative through a Note Verbale in 2017. Accordingly, with the support of the EU CBRN CoE, Nigeria conducted a Needs Assessment Questionnaire (NAQ) which was developed into a draft CBRN National Action Plan. The country also received support from the EU in developing its National Biosecurity Policy and Action Plan.

The EU was delighted to accept Nigeria as new Partner Country to the EU CBRN CoE in 2022, following a formal expression of interest by the Government of Nigeria. With the new membership, the CoE network brings together 64 Partner Countries that cooperate at regional and international level to strengthen CBRN risk mitigation and to promote a global culture of safety and security.



Ms. Pamela West, Nigeria's National Focal Point.

## Ms Pamela West, Nigeria's National Focal Point

Ms Pamela West, Nuclear Security Officer for the Office of the National Security Adviser in Nigeria (ONSA), is Nigeria's NFP to the EU CBRN CoE. Ms West was engaged in the CoE network prior to Nigeria joining the EU CBRN CoE, as she attended the 8th NFPs International Meeting, held in Brussels in 2022.

Ms West is a Policy maker with over 10 years' experience. She specializes in nuclear security detection architecture, CBRN emergency preparedness and response, national security policies, national threat and risk assessments, Risk Communication, Transport Security and CBRNe security. Ms West holds a Masters' Degree in Oil and Gas Law from the University of Aberdeen, a Barrister at Law degree from the Nigerian Law School, Enugu, and a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. Ms. West is a Certified Nuclear Security Professional (CNSP) by the World Institute of Nuclear Security (WINS), where she is also an Ambassador for the Institute. She is also trained and tested on IATA/ICAO Standards for Class 6.2 Dangerous Goods Shipments.

“ Nigeria has come a long way in CBRN risk mitigation before officially joining the EU CBRN CoE. ”

For more information on how the EU CBRN CoE is supporting the strengthening of CBRN risk mitigation in the North Africa and Sahel region, please visit [the CoE website](#).





# From the crime scene to the courtroom

## Building a case for prosecution of CBRN crimes

Talgat Toleubayev

The European Union Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Risk Mitigation Centres of Excellence (EU CBRN CoE) Initiative is driven by a "bottom-up approach" with a primary focus to address the needs, gaps and priorities of its 64 partner-country network in the field of CBRN safety and security. Within the framework of this Initiative, we also focus on the follow up of completed projects and implement any spin-off initiatives requested by the beneficiary Partner Countries. One of such success stories was the development of a series of guidebooks on the investigation and prosecution of CBRN crimes. An innovative effort, this initiative led by the South East and Eastern Europe (SEEE) Regional Secretariat, was awarded "Best Regional Success Story" during the 8th International Meeting of the CoE National Focal Points, held in Brussels in May 2022.

The Prosecutors Guide to Chemical and Biological Crimes was produced by the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) with funding received from the European Union (EU) within about a year. The global focus of the Guide allows it to provide prosecutors, law enforcement and relevant investigative

agencies with guidance to support the successful prosecution of incidents involving the acquisition, stockpiling, production, transfer, or use of a chemical or biological agent. The publication has been made available in English, French, Spanish, Ukrainian, Arabic, and Russian.

### A series of capacity building and training packages

With the EU funding and On-site Technical Assistance (OSA) support, UNICRI developed some additional capacity building and training packages aimed to integrate the Guide as part of the professional duties of prosecutors, investigators, forensics experts, law enforcement and police authorities.

The package starts with a Table Top Exercise (TTX) focused on identifying their needs, gaps and priorities for the beneficiary countries. The theoretical training course continues with a five-day training course entitled "Building a case for prosecution of chemical and biological (CB) crimes". Composed of 37 training modules, this course allows the trainees to learn about the entire process of investigating the case starting from the crime scene contaminated with the CB materials, to the eventual prosecution in the courtroom. Such training is

not provided by any international organizations operating in this field, meaning that the European Union and UNICRI have managed to fulfil a unique learning need.

The theoretical component of the training package is complemented with a practical Mock Trial or Moot Court exercise. In this part, real judges, prosecutors, investigators and all relevant stakeholders who took part

“ Such training is not provided by any international organizations operating in this field, meaning that the European Union and UNICRI have managed to fulfil a unique learning need. ”



First responders participate in a field exercise on countering CBRN terrorism threats, in Beirut, Lebanon, December 2021.

in the previous two training sessions, could conduct their own practical activity. They might choose one real or fictitious scenario for this purpose, and go through all necessary steps from the investigation to the eventual prosecution. The TTX and Mock Trial were tested in demo formats during the CBRN Academy and the BACAC conference, in late 2022. In addition, the first five-day training aimed at building a case for prosecution of chemical and biological crimes was delivered to relevant Ukrainian parties with the support of the European Commission in 2023. The prosecutors' offices from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Georgia, Montenegro, Moldova and Ukraine requested to conduct this type of training package in their countries.

Lastly, a three-day Train-The-Trainer course will be conducted at the end of the entire package before the official transfer of the training course

to the selected training institution. The ultimate purpose of this entire learning package initiative is to integrate the training curriculum in national training institutions or academies for prosecutors, law enforcement or the police, so that participants develop the necessary knowledge and skills of the Guide as part of their learning process.

The expected outcome from implementing the entire capacity building and training package will include several benefits, offering countries the possibility to: self-evaluate their own capabilities for the investigation and prosecution of chemical and biological crimes, increase their awareness about key players in the domain within their national teams, identify relevant participants for the training package, detect equipment needs, learn about existing legislative gaps, or address needs to criminalize illegal acts in their criminal and penal codes.

The next steps will consist of developing e-learning modules, educational videos, and pre-recorded webinars as part of the capacity building and training package. These online learning tools will be used as a complementary resource for trainees across the CoE 64 Partner Countries

### TRAINING CURRICULA

#### Prosecutors Guide to Chemical and Biological Crimes

- ✓ Two-day Table Top Exercise
- ✓ Five-day training to build a case for prosecution
- ✓ Two-day Moot Court / Mock Trial practical exercise
- ✓ Three-day Train-the-Trainer course





# Success Stories 2023

## Discover the CoE network's most inspiring success stories



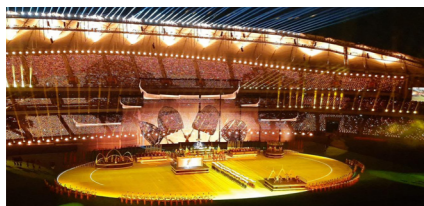
**Benin**  
[Advancing CBRN risk management practices](#)



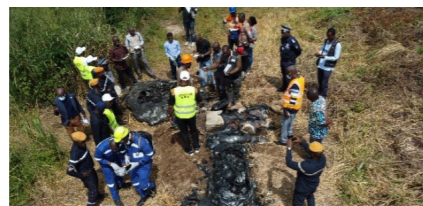
**Bosnia & Herzegovina**  
[Speedy process of Bosnia and Herzegovina to harmonize CBRN National Action Plan with EU CBRN risk mitigation methodology](#)



**Burundi**  
[Adoption of the Law on the peaceful use, safety and security of nuclear energy and ionising radiation](#)



**Cambodia**  
[Multi-agency exercise demonstrates Cambodia's capacity to respond to CBRN attacks during 2023 Southeast Asian \(SEA\) Games](#)



**Côte d'Ivoire**  
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**Georgia**  
[What comes after the CBRN National Action Plan has been developed? The Georgian experience](#)



**Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon**  
[Establishment of a CBRN exercise series in the Middle East Region involving the highest level of international evaluators](#)



**Kyrgyz Republic**  
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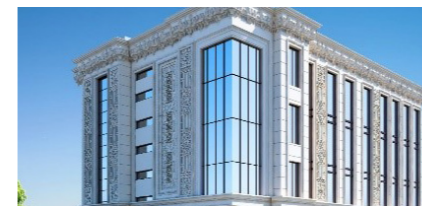
**Niger**  
[The strategic partnership of Niger with neighbor countries](#)



**Pakistan**  
[Strengthening preparedness and response for mass gatherings and other health threats](#)



**Senegal**  
[From theory to practice: the direct link between the CBRNE Master Programme and the needs of the countries](#)



**Tajikistan**  
[Establishment of CBRN Forensics Center of Tajikistan](#)



**Thailand**  
[Thailand leads national Simulation Exercise \(SimEx\) that validates country's capacity to respond to cross-border disease events](#)



**Togo**  
[One for all, all for one: a participatory approach to strengthening CBRN risk mitigation](#)



**Ukraine**  
[The EU CBRN Centres of Excellence support to Ukraine](#)



**United Arab Emirates**  
[Train-The-Trainers Conference for Medical Preparedness and Response to CBRN Incidents in the GCC](#)



**Uzbekistan**  
[Integrating mobile labs into public health system in Uzbekistan](#)



# AFRICAN ATLANTIC FAÇADE

Mr. Boubker Belhaj, Ms. Stefania Micucci, Mr. Jaouad Anter Rahmoun



## New Head of the African Atlantic Façade Regional Secretariat

On December 15, 2022, Mr. Boubker Belhaj, from the Moroccan Civil Protection, assumed the role of the new Head of the African Atlantic Façade Regional Secretariat of the EU CBRN CoE. Mr. Belhaj, possessing a twenty-five years long experience in civil protection, has stepped into this leadership position with a revitalized sense of enthusiasm. The new head will guide the region, building upon the decade-long legacy left by its predecessor.

The entire region welcomes the new Head and looks with confidence at a new successful decade!

## 19th African Atlantic Façade Regional Round Table Meeting

B. Belhaj, S. Micucci, J. Anter Rahmoun

The 19th Regional Round Table Meeting (RTM) of the African Atlantic Façade (AAF) Regional Secretariat of the EU CBRN Centres of Excellence (CoE) Initiative was held in Rabat, Morocco, on March 20 and 21, 2023.

This gathering was attended by the 10 National Focal Points from the region and representatives of the Regional Secretariat, including the Head of Secretariat, the UNICRI Regional Coordinators, and the CBRN On-Site Assistance Experts. Additionally, the CoE Programme Manager from the European Union participated in the event.

The RTM facilitated the exchange of experiences among Partner Countries, placing particular emphasis on their 2022-2023 respective accomplishments in the CBRN field. Additionally, attendees discussed the implementation of current

projects and emphasized strategies for its improvement.

The primary result of the meeting was the recognition and ranking of regional CBRN concerns that need attention, with a consensus being achieved on the matter of Food Safety and Security.

The RTM also provided an opportunity to introduce newly appointed members, including the Head of Secretariat, Mr. Boubker Belhaj as well as the National and Deputy Focal Points for Morocco, Mr. Hicham Zahri and Mr. Amine Hmeurras and the National Focal Point for Benin, Mr. Mahouton Mathieu Hounkanrin.

In conclusion, Partner Countries collectively emphasized the favorable results generated by the EU CBRN CoE Initiative over the past decade within their respective countries, marking a celebration of the 10th anniversary of the African Atlantic Façade Regional Secretariat.



19th Regional Round Table Meeting of the African Atlantic Façade Regional Secretariat, Rabat, March 2023.

## CBRN Conference for the Arab Region Addressing CBRN Risks: experiences and good practices in the European Union and the Members of the League of Arab States

B. Belhaj, S. Micucci, J. Anter Rahmoun

From May 30 - 31, 2023, the African Atlantic Façade (AAF) Regional Secretariat participated in the CBRN Conference for the Arab Region, jointly organized by the European Union (EU), the League of Arab States (LAS), and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) within the framework of the EU CBRN Centres of Excellence (CoE) Initiative. The event took place at the LAS headquarters in Cairo, Egypt.

The primary aim of the conference was to enhance coordination between the EU CBRN CoE Initiative and the LAS Member States. This was achieved through the exchange of information concerning ongoing and upcoming programs, initiatives, and effective practices related to CBRN risk mitigation policies and activities. The ultimate goal was to lay the foundation for more robust cooperation between these entities.

A dedicated session titled "CBRN Risk Mitigation in the African Atlantic Façade Region: An Overview of Priorities, Activities, and Best Practices" provided an opportunity for representatives from the Regional Secretariat, as well as National Focal Points and experts from Morocco and Mauritania, to showcase the CBRN accomplishments both at the regional and national level.

The presentations particularly highlighted the establishment of the first CoE African CBRNe Master Program in Rabat, Morocco, the Secretariat's nearly decade-long strategy for mitigating risks associated with chemical industries, and the crucial role played by the National Focal Points.



'CBRN Conference for the Arab Region Addressing CBRN Risks', held at the League of Arab States' headquarters in Cairo, Egypt, in May 2023.



Mr. Boubker Belhaj, new Head of the African Atlantic Façade Regional Secretariat, during a panel session at the 9th International meeting of the EU CBRN CoE National Focal Points, June 2023, Brussels.

## Head of Secretariat shares region's approach to fostering national experts engagement in regional projects

B. Belhaj, S. Micucci, J. Anter Rahmoun

On the occasion of the 9th International meeting of the EU CBRN CoE National Focal Points, June 13-15, 2023, Brussels, Belgium, the recently appointed Head of Secretariat for the AAF region delivered a presentation focused on the strategic

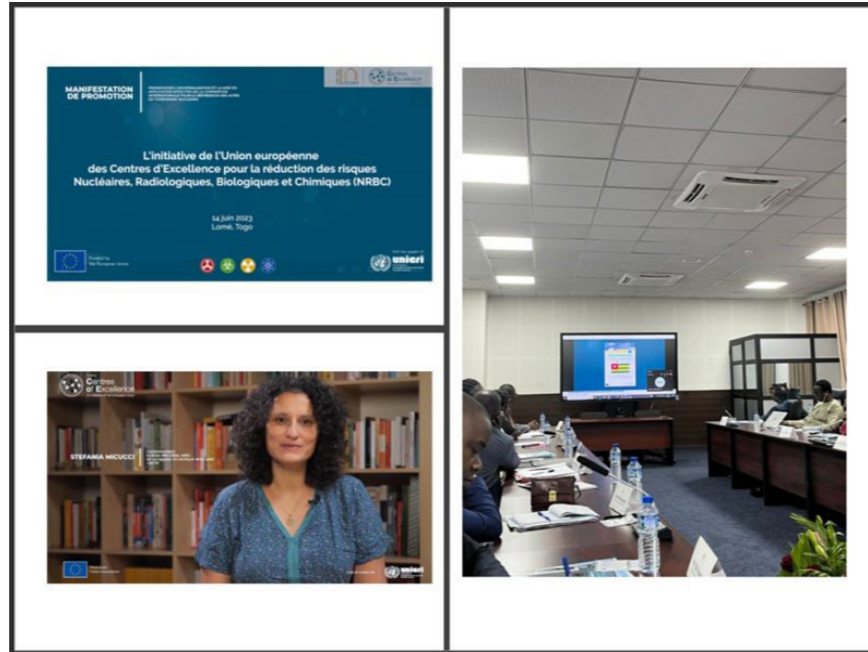
approach of the regional secretariat regarding the participation of national experts in regional project execution and implementation. This strategy is aimed at ensuring the long-term sustainability of the CBRN CoE initiative within the region. In his presentation, the Head also underscored the significance of the region's active involvement in launching interregional projects and fostering international cooperation.



**Meeting on the universalization and implementation of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism**

B. Belhaj, S. Micucci, J. Anter Rahmoun

On June 14, 2023, the UNICRI Regional Coordinator was invited to present during the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT)/ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) event on the universalization and implementation of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (ICSANT). The event was organized within the parliament of Togo and gathered national deputies. The Regional Coordinator attended through a video message where she highlighted Togo's significant efforts in countering terrorism and advancing nuclear security since becoming a member of the EU CBRN CoE Initiative.



Meeting on the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

**Regional Workshop on Universalization and Effective Implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention in Northern Africa**

B. Belhaj, S. Micucci, J. Anter Rahmoun

On June 14, 2023, the African Atlantic Façade Regional Coordinator attended the Regional Workshop on the Universalization and Effective Implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention in Northern Africa, organized by United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) in Rabat, Morocco. The workshop served as a platform for in-depth discussions, fostering a comprehensive understanding of the BWC and its implementation requirements, including national legislation, Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs), and the roles of National Contact Points (NCPs). The Regional Coordinator delivered a presentation on the synergies between the BWC effective implementation and the EU CBRN CoE Initiative.



Regional Workshop on Universalization and Effective Implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention in Northern Africa, Rabat, Morocco.

**Graduation ceremony of the first cohort the EU CBRN CoE African CBRNe Master Programme**

B. Belhaj, S. Micucci, J. Anter Rahmoun

On June 16, 2023, 21 students from six Partner Countries of the African Atlantic Façade (AAF) Regional Secretariat were awarded dual Moroccan and French diplomas after completing a one-year Master's program specializing in the management of CBRNe risks, with a focus on Africa. The students are from Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon, Maroc, Senegal, and Togo.



Graduation ceremony of the first cohort the EU CBRN CoE African CBRNe Master Programme.

The ceremony was attended by the President of the Université Internationale de Rabat, the Vice President for International Relations of the Université de Haute Alsace, and the Ambassador of the European Union Delegation. The EU Ambassador highlighted, "Through this initiative, the European Union is pleased to support Morocco's vision of strengthening South-South cooperation and stands by the country to promote this trilateral cooperation between Morocco, Africa, and Europe."



Training for first responders in Cameroon.

This Master's program, fully funded by the EU CBRN Centres of Excellence (CoE) Initiative, is the first of its kind in Africa. It equips graduates with the necessary skills to better understand CBRN risk challenges, and the analytical capabilities required to provide informed recommendations to their leadership regarding priorities and actions to ensure the safety of their citizens.

Resulting from a close collaboration between the Université de Haute Alsace, the Université Internationale de Rabat, and the AAF Regional Secretariat, the Master's program is now looking to its 3rd and 4th years. The program aims to expand to new African countries, both French-speaking and English-speaking, in the near future to broaden its reach and impact.

**Cameroon holds training for first responders on the use of specialized equipment to manage transport accidents with dangerous goods**

B. Belhaj, S. Micucci, J. Anter Rahmoun

On June 25 – 30, 2023, Cameroon held a training for first responders on the use of specialized equipment to manage dangerous goods transport accidents. Held in Yaoundé, the training sessions were delivered as part of follow-up activities of the CoE Project 70, which supplied the necessary equipment. The On-site Technical Assistance (OSA) expert of the African Atlantic Façade region participated in the event.

On the final day, in collaboration with the trainer and the Civil Protection Directorate, a field exercise was organized so that participants could implement their newly acquired knowledge and incorporate the new materials into their intervention plans.

CoE Project 70 aimed to provide specialized equipment to manage transport accidents with dangerous goods for first responders, in connection with two parallel CoE Projects: SECTRANS-AAF and SECTRANS-NAS, which focus on capacity building for safer transportation of hazardous materials in the African Atlantic Façade and North Africa and Sahel regions.

**Regional training on Chemical incidents response held in Rabat**

B. Belhaj, S. Micucci, J. Anter Rahmoun

From November 7 to 18, 2022, a group of 20 participants from 4 African Atlantic Façade Partner Countries (Cote d'Ivoire, Mauritania, Morocco, and Senegal) took part in a training program focused on the management of and response to chemical incidents. Organised by the Moroccan Civil Protection General Directorate, in Rabat, Morocco, the two-week training represented the second phase of the program and provided the same participants from phase I with additional knowledge on the subject.



Regional training held in Rabat, November 2022.

**National Activities 2022 - 2023**

B. Belhaj, S. Micucci, J. Anter Rahmoun

Between 2022 and September 2023, several activities were conducted at the national level by the African Atlantic Façade (AAF) Regional Secretariat to support the implementation of the EU CBRN CoE Initiative in the ten Partner Countries of the region.



National team meeting in Ivory Coast, October 2022.

Priority was given to the finalization of CBRN National Action Plans (NAP), with meetings organised with the support of the On-site Technical Assistance (OSA) expert in Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon, Liberia, Mauritania, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. In particular, Benin started the drafting of its NAP thus joining the other nine countries in the region in this important exercise, Liberia and Mauritania finalized its NAP, Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon and Sierra Leone gathered their National CBRN Teams to review and update their NAPs. The National CBRN Action Plans of Togo, Mauritania and Senegal were officially approved. Moreover, a workshop was organized in Benin to discuss the issue of the control of chemicals and ways to improve the protection of human health, the environment and the security while a meeting was organized in Cameroon to support the setting up of an industrial risks master degree.

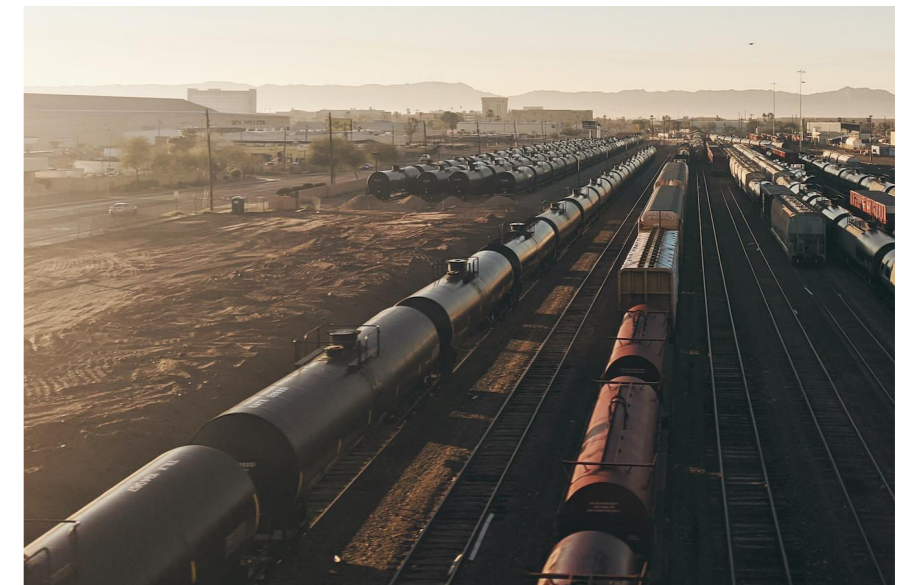


National CBRN team meeting in Mauritania, June 2022.

**SAFETIC: New project launched to further enhance safe transportation and installations using chemicals**

B. Belhaj, S. Micucci, J. Anter Rahmoun

In July 2022, the African Atlantic Façade Regional Secretariat launched the CoE Project 95 - SAFETIC, focusing on the safe transportation and installations using chemicals.



CoE Project 95 SAFETIC focuses on safe transportation and installation using chemicals.

Project 95 builds upon the foundations laid by CoE projects 41, 69, and 70, making substantial contributions to the growth and enrichment of both national and regional knowledge in this crucial domain. Notably, P95 is the fourth project dedicated to addressing this theme, aligning with the region's enduring strategy for reducing industrial risks in the long term.

This ambitious project, aimed at establishing complete legal frameworks and enhancing national capacities and capabilities, has already overseen the coordination of three regional events and conducted over 70 training sessions, all led by national experts across the ten partner countries. Additionally, numerous visits have been arranged in these partner countries to assess the safety and security conditions of their chemical industries and suggest improvements where needed.



Senegal's National CBRN team meeting, Dakar, July 2023.

Further endeavors are in the pipeline, actively reinforcing the region's commitment to realizing the goal of formulating a comprehensive regional strategy for mitigating industrial chemical risks.

**Senegal's National CBRN team meeting strengthens collaboration and knowledge exchange in AAF region**

B. Belhaj, S. Micucci, J. Anter Rahmoun

national CBRN team of another country, with a specific focus on identified issues. During the meeting in Dakar, the matter of management of obsolete pesticides was effectively addressed, resulting in valuable and enriching exchanges.

**New projects**

✓ Discover newly launched Projects on the CoE website:

<https://europa.eu/lrrGCyf>

Building on the pioneering approach that defines the African Atlantic Façade Regional Secretariat, a national CBRN team meeting was conducted in July 2023 in Senegal with the objective of promoting collaboration and knowledge exchange. This groundbreaking strategy entails inviting experts from one partner country to engage in discussions with the

The AAF Regional Secretariat firmly supports the notion that by convening regional experts, we can tap into a wealth of diverse experiences and perspectives, which can make a significant contribution to enhancing regional cooperation and collaboration.

# CENTRAL ASIA

Dr. Lela Bakanidze, Dr. Hendrik Visser, Gerald Zikeli, LtCol Kilian Stoecker, Andrew Proudlove, Samal Asainova, Dr. Nigel Lightfoot, Jackie Gibney, John Haley, Prof. Raquel Duarte-Davidson, Dr. Mark Salter

## BACAC Conference on COVID-19 Pandemic: Lessons Learned

Dr. Lela Bakanidze and Dr. Hendrik Visser

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) was classified as a worldwide pandemic in March 2020. Quickly it became apparent that society and the medical infrastructure was not adequately prepared to face such a challenge. Many lessons need to be learned from the last three years in order to better prepare public authorities in Central Asia to mitigate some of the consequences of future pandemics.

In the last three years, the general public was introduced to various levels of sanitary control measures, such as recommendations for hand washing, mask mandates, social distancing, isolation and quarantine measures, lock downs, and various other restrictions, which caused great societal and economic difficulties. At the same time, the medical and scientific community found itself under great pressure to address the growing crisis, while the availability of resources, supplies and support were heavily impacted by the pandemic. Nevertheless, the world medical and scientific community was able to develop various diagnostic, treatments and vaccine options that have ensured the prospect of public life returning to (a new) normal. Along the way, many challenges had to be resolved, from which many different lessons were learned in different countries.

To discuss some of the lessons learned during this difficult period, the Biosafety Association of Central Asia and the Caucuses (BACAC) organised a Conference on "The COVID-19 Pandemic: Lessons Learned". Held on 3 – 7 October 2022 in Tbilisi, Georgia, the conference gathered about 350 experts from 27 countries whose activities are aimed at solving the issues of biosafety and biosecurity in the world.

The event received support from the EU CBRN CoE Initiative, the US Department of State's Biosecurity Engagement Program, and the Georgian National Center for Disease Control and Public Health (NCDC). More than 17 international organisations also provided technical and financial support. The first three days of the conference (3-5 October) were devoted to pre-conference training workshops.



Training workshop during BACAC Conference "The COVID-19 Pandemic: Lessons Learned".

“ Many lessons need to be learned from the last three years in order to better prepare public authorities in Central Asia to mitigate some of the consequences of future pandemics. ”



Training workshop during BACAC Conference "The COVID-19 Pandemic: Lessons Learned".

About 30 training sessions were conducted on different topics during these days. Part of the training workshops addressed at the microbiologists were held in the Richard Lugar Center for Public Health Research, based in the NCDC premises.

During the conference, there was a demonstration of two mobile labs for

disease diagnostics, an equipment donated by the EU CBRN CoE to Uzbekistan. Experts from Uzbekistan Institutes of Virology and Epidemiology, and Bundeswehr Institute of Microbiology team showed the capacity of the sophisticated mobile labs, which can be used during field works and outbreaks.

Several round table discussions for preparing white papers were held too, particularly on legislative frameworks, training and education, COVID-19 pandemic's consequences, biosafety and biosecurity, climate change, etc.

The conference's presentations focused on the lessons learned in relation to the challenges that arose during the pandemic, in particular: legislative issues, diagnostics and surveillance, biological waste management, effective public health communication, sanitary control, risk planning and management, biosecurity, and education and training. Additionally, during a special side-meeting for BACAC members, a new Executive Board and the new President of BACAC, Ms. Damira Ashyralieva (Kyrgyzstan), were elected.

The conference stimulated great discussions amongst the attending experts. As a result, six white papers will be published on various topics related to the lessons learned from the pandemic. In addition, the conference provided the opportunity for initiating and strengthening new and existing regional and international expert networks.

## Topics covered during the BACAC Conference

- ✓ Lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic for the BWC regime
- ✓ Risk assessment of lab work with a "respiratory air borne pathogen"
- ✓ Simulation exercise: Respiratory Tract Infection
- ✓ Sampling and recovery strategy from biological contaminated environments
- ✓ Risk management and unexpected outbreaks: lessons learned from COVID-19 and monkeypox – Theory & Practical
- ✓ Building a case for successful prosecution of biological crimes
- ✓ Response & investigation of a containment laboratory incident
- ✓ 4th Edition of WHO Manual on Laboratory Biosafety: facility designs and workflows
- ✓ Export control issues of dual-use materials
- ✓ IIFA diagnostics of zoonotic pathogens – Lab training
- ✓ Evaluation of country pandemic preparedness
- ✓ Know-Your-Customer for emerging biotechnologies
- ✓ Effective grant proposal writing



**Addressing training needs in response to COVID-19 outbreak in remote regions**

Dr. Hendrik Visser

In 2010, the EU CBRN CoE Initiative was initiated to strengthen risk mitigation capabilities and capacities of natural, accidental, and deliberate CBRN incidents in EU Partner Countries. Since its inception, the Initiative has funded over 100 projects, with close to half of these projects addressing some biological risk mitigation aspect. These 'B' projects greatly assisted the Initiative's Partner Countries to be better prepared for and to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, if anything became clear during the last 3 years of the pandemic, it's that many biosafety and biosecurity risks and challenges remain. One of these is the need for continued training of specialists, and especially non-specialists, in sanitary control measures. At the start of the pandemic the implementers of EU CBRN CoE Project 53 (P53), the International Science and Technology Center (ISTC), together with the Regional Secretariats of the Central Asia (CA) region and the South-East Eastern Europe (SEEE) region conducted a questionnaire with the Partner Countries of both regions to identify training needs. From the list of identified needs, three key areas were addressed.

**PROJECT 53**

**Key training needs in response to COVID-19 outbreak in remote regions**

- 1 Law enforcement/first line responders
- 2 Sanitary risk assessment for medical and laboratory
- 3 COVID-19 Quality Management System

**1) Training of law enforcement/first line responders**, such as police officers, emergency control personnel, border guards and customs control officers. First line responders are not always fully aware of basic biosafety concepts to keep themselves or individuals they interact with safe. Additionally, biosafety protocols have often been developed for medical or research personnel, which are not always directly applicable to situations that are relevant to first line responders. Hence a train-the-trainer course was provided that was specifically designed to address the needs and scenarios that first line responders have to deal with.

In total 25 specialist trainers passed the train-the-trainer course: Albania - 1, Armenia - 2, Georgia - 4, Kazakhstan - 3, Kyrgyzstan - 3, Mongolia - 2, Moldova - 3, Pakistan - 3, Tajikistan - 4. Provided by Thin Blue Line International, this training workshop was co-funded by the US Cooperative Threat Reduction Program (US Department of State), which also provided co-funding for the newly trained trainers (Armenia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan) to conduct training workshop for their colleagues in their respective countries. As a result, over 300 first line responders have been trained to date.

**2) Sanitary risk assessment training for medical and laboratory facilities.** Although various training programs were provided in the past on infection control risk assessment, Partner Countries indicated that there was still a need for such training, especially given that the pandemic raised new challenges. Medical facilities (which are open facilities, or easily accessible by the public) and laboratories (which are closed, or entrance-controlled environments) were selected for this training, however, the basic principles taught during the train-the-trainer workshop can be applied to performing assessments of other facilities as well (such as schools, hotels, shopping centres, etc).

In total 29 specialist from the two regions passed the course: Georgia - 4, Kazakhstan - 3, Kyrgyzstan - 4, Mongolia - 6, Pakistan - 6, Tajikistan - 6. Provided by FORMIT and Sacco Hospital, this workshop was also co-funded by the US Cooperative Threat Reduction Program and provided funding for follow up training activities by the newly trained trainers (Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan). As a result of this follow-up funding, over 400 specialists have been trained at medical and laboratory facilities in the participating countries.

**3) COVID-19 Quality Management System training course.** This workshop aimed to provide information and training of Quality Management (QM) not only for diagnostic testing techniques (like PCR, or ELISA), but to set up a comprehensive QM system that takes into account the full diagnostics process: sample collection, processing, packaging, transportation, testing, data collection, data processing, data analysis and data management, as well as, waste management and biosafety/security issues.

A total of 18 specialists participated in this training course: Albania - 3, Georgia - 3, Kazakhstan - 3, Mongolia - 1, Moldova - 3, North Macedonia - 1, Pakistan - 3, Uzbekistan - 1. It was provided by IQLS.

“If anything became clear during the last 3 years of the pandemic, it's that many biosafety and biosecurity risks and challenges remain.”



The two Uzbek mobile labs were installed outside on the grounds of Tashkent Branch of Samarkand Institute of Veterinary Medicine.

**Rapid Response Mobile Laboratories: Strengthening the Uzbek response to disease outbreaks in remote areas**

Gerald Zikeli, LtCol Kilian Stoecker

Epidemic outbreaks of infectious diseases pose a substantial risk for public health services worldwide. In particular, remote rural areas are susceptible of such risks as surveillance infrastructure is often limited. For the fast mitigation of local outbreaks, it is critical that diagnostic units are available on-site in all populated areas to survey the population and prevent potential larger outbreaks. This has been true also in case of the COVID-19 pandemic.

To support the Republic of Uzbekistan in increasing its capacities in disease surveillance and outbreak mitigation, in 2020, the European Union initiated a project aimed to establish mobile diagnostic capacities in Uzbekistan, within the framework of EU CBRN CoE Initiative. The International Science and Technology Center (ISTC) was commissioned by the EU to implement these capacities under the CoE Project 53 "Strengthening the National Legal Framework and Provision of Specialized

Training on Bio-Safety and Bio-Security in Central Asian and South-East and Eastern European Countries". To establish rapid response mobile laboratories (RRML) in Uzbekistan, the ISTC teamed up with the Bundeswehr Institute of Microbiology (IMB) from Germany.

For a better understanding, let us give you some background on the RRML. The IMB is the scientific centre of competence for medical biological defence of the German Armed Forces and holds an extensive expertise in field diagnostics of highly infectious pathogens. To ensure fast deployment and state-of-the-art diagnostics with high standards of biosafety and biosecurity, the IMB developed a RRML for pathogen diagnostics. The complete laboratory equipment and consumables are packed in 22 wheeled, ruggedized, water- and dustproof boxes (weighing not more than 31kg), three cooling boxes and a foldable, sub pressurized glove box for the safe handling of samples potentially containing pathogens up to risk group 4. The infrastructural requirements for setting up the mobile laboratory are minimal. Generally, almost every local building can be used as long

as it provides at least 28 m2 of space. If no such infrastructure is available, the Mobile lab is also equipped with an inflatable tent system. The response team only requires a pickup truck or, in case of longer distances, a (commercial) air carrier to deploy the mobile lab to the field. The mobile lab fulfils all requirements to be used in remote and rural areas with limited infrastructure.

For Project 53, the IMB assembled two mobile lab units based on the existing concept and adapted them to the needs of the Uzbek partners. Following delays due the COVID-19 pandemic, the ISTC and the IMB handed over the two Mobile labs to the Ministry of Public Health of the Republic of Uzbekistan in July 2021. High-level officials from the Uzbek Ministry of Public Health and State Committee on Industrial Safety as well as the UNICRI, the WHO and the EU attended the official ceremony.

Following the handover of the equipment and supplies, the next task was to train Uzbek laboratory staff in putting the Mobile lab into service and operating the equipment according to international standards of biosafety and biosecurity.

“As the ongoing pandemic has shown, with infectious diseases, nobody is safe until everybody is safe. The mobile laboratories will enhance the ability to react to bio threats wherever they arise and to leave no one behind.”

To do so, the German expert team conducted comprehensive trainings for laboratory and health specialists from the Republican Specialized Scientific and Practical Medical Center for Epidemiology, Microbiology, Infectious and Parasitic Diseases (RSSPMCEMIPD) and the Research Institute of Virology (RIV) of the Uzbek Ministry of Public Health. From July 2021 to September 2022, the Uzbek Mobile lab team learned all aspects of mobile diagnostics: from assembling and maintaining the Mobile lab to the safe handling, processing, and analysis of potentially infectious diagnostic samples and communicating the test results.



IMB experts conducted practical and theoretical workshops to introduce the Uzbek laboratory experts to methods and techniques used in the mobile lab

To evaluate these newly acquired skills, the German experts simulated an outbreak of a highly infectious haemorrhagic fever in the Greater Tashkent area in May 2022 and in Bukhara in November 2022. These two field deployment exercises put the knowledge of the Uzbek team to the test. The team was faced with hundreds of challenging patient samples that needed to be analysed with results communicated under high time pressure. At the same time, the field deployment exercises helped the Uzbek partners to train the logistical requirements for the relocation and autonomous operation of the Mobile lab with challenges in water and power supply. The success of the two field deployment exercises proved the readiness of the Uzbek team to assist the Republic of Uzbekistan to mitigate future public health challenges. As Mr. Bakhtiyor Gulyamov, Head of the Regional Secretariat for Central Asia of the EU CBRN CoE Initiative and Chairman of the Committee for Industrial Safety of the Republic of Uzbekistan, stated in his remarks while observing the field deployment exercise in Bukhara in November 2022: "As the ongoing pandemic has shown, with infectious diseases, nobody is safe until everybody is safe. The mobile laboratories will enhance the Government's ability to react to biological threats wherever they arise and to leave no one behind."



Two Uzbek laboratory experts process diagnostic patient samples in the Glovebox, a sub-pressurized workspace that allows the safe handling of samples with suspicion of risk group 4 pathogens.

### German-Uzbek cooperation

As the EU-financed project completed in December 2022, the German-Uzbek cooperation is now part of the German Foreign Office's German Biosecurity Programme. Until 2025, the project aims to extend the diagnostic portfolio and train Uzbek experts as trainers to increase the number of trained experts within the country and beyond. Furthermore, the project aims to identify areas where the mobile labs can be incorporated into existing institutional and national risk mitigation mechanisms as well as strengthen the scientific cooperation between the IMB and the Uzbek partners.



German Biosecurity Programme

### Project 87 PRECA enters its final year – Preparedness and Response for Mass Gatherings and other Health Threats in Central Asia

Andrew Proudlove, Samal Asainova, Dr Nigel Lightfoot, Jackie Gibney, John Haley, Prof. Raquel Duarte-Davidson, Dr Mark Salter

We love Mass Gatherings, and they can have real benefits. However, COVID reminded us that they can threaten human health. Today, more and more people are moving around Central Asia (we are all on the move again it seems) and increasing numbers of Mass Gatherings will present new or increased health threats to the region. The preparation for Mass Gatherings requires considerable organisation and coordination to protect and safeguard public health.

Launched in 2020, EU CBRN CoE Project 87 PRECA has supported the strengthening and empowerment of Mass Gathering Public health preparedness and response in Central Asia through a series of assessment, scientific activities, and training measures. As PRECA enters its final year of implementation, it is important to look at the progress made, the latest achievements reached, and the way ahead before the project completion.

#### What are PRECA Work Packages?

1. Food Safety
2. Water Safety
3. Chemicals & Poison Information Centres
4. Exercises and Testing & Public Health C3

In Spring 2022, PRECA held a major face-to-face 'symposium' in-region attended by 130 participants, consisting of 4 x Work Package (WP), Train The

Trainer (TTT) courses, a Regional Tabletop "Exercise Olympic Gold" and 5 x inaugural meetings of the WP Regional Working Groups. The project now has a Regional Working Group (RWG) for each work package that met in Tashkent last year, and continue to meet regularly to drive the project forward. Composed of representatives from participating countries, the RWGs' aims include the development of Regional Guidelines; ensuring a basic system of fast information exchange during a Mass Gathering event or crisis; public awareness raising activities across the region; and developing or reinforcing country agreements for mutual support.

Project 87 has supported the delivery of National Training courses for each WP by masters trainers in different locations, including Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. In addition, access to and training on TOXBASE (International Poison Information Centres' chemical database) has been provided to clinical public health professionals in all Partner Countries, bringing the establishment of Poison Information Centres and a regional Poison Information Centre network one step closer.

The development and reinforcement of regional capacities will see a milestone achieved with the delivery of a large-scale regional exercise, planned for May 2024, which will play out in all Partner Countries simultaneously. The exercise will echo previous table-top exercises in Tashkent but on a much larger scale and at the highest levels of government. The organisers are the Exercises and Testing group and the Public Health C3 group, who have combined and, alongside National Focal Points and the Central Asia Regional Secretariat, are working towards this major capacity-building event.

PRECA gained support from key international partners engaged in Public health preparedness and response. The World Health Organisation (WHO)

has officially agreed to become an observer on the Project and will work with PRECA in the development of Poison Information Centres throughout the region. To support these efforts, the WHO guidance on the establishment of poisons information centres was translated into the Russian language, making it more accessible to relevant stakeholders in the region. The World Bank's International Finance Corporation's (IFC) Food Safety Advisory Program has also become an observer on the Project and has shared some food safety resources.

### PRECA's objectives at a glance

- ✓ Improving Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) at Mass Gatherings by enhancing the safety of food through food hygiene training, and the safety of water through water quality testing and protection of sources.
- ✓ Guarding against chemical threats to Mass Gatherings by developing Poison Information Centres in each country, connected to form a regional network.
- ✓ Ensuring that Public Health Command, Control and Communication (C3) systems provide rapid, regular, and transparent communications.
- ✓ Ensuring that Mass Gatherings' stakeholders are properly resourced to meet the task by delivering the right equipment to Partner Countries.
- ✓ Development of exercises to test plans and delivery of six national exercise at the end of the project.

**PRECA's future in 10 actions**

1. Procurement and delivery of equipment for each WP to Partner Countries
2. Delivery of the remainder of first (mentored) and subsequent (un-mentored) national training courses
3. Proposal for a Rapid Information Exchange and Alert System
4. Listing of key crisis management and communication personnel (media officers) in Partner Countries
5. A seminar on public communication of risks
6. Media training for crisis management and political personnel
7. A high-level regional Table Top Exercise that will run in all Partner Countries simultaneously.
8. Clarification of agreements for mutual support
9. Finalisation of Regional Guidelines
10. Planning the final regional meeting, for sharing results and lessons learned

**WEBSITE**

✓ Discover more on PRECA's website, available in English and Russian:

<https://preca.istc.int/en-l>



Training session delivered under PRECA.

P87 PRECA NUMBERS OF PEOPLE TRAINED TO DATE	KAZAKHSTAN KYRGYZSTAN MONGOLIA PAKISTAN TAJIKISTAN UZBEKISTAN						TOTAL
<b>REGIONAL TRAINING EVENTS</b>							
WEBINAR 1- RAISING AWARENESS - INTRODUCTION TO P87 PRECA	13	11	15	9	16	16	80
WEBINAR 2 - FOOD SAFETY	22	15	17	10	16	23	103
WEBINAR 3 - WATER SAFETY	20	13	17	9	16	20	95
WEBINAR 4 - CHEMICALS AND POISON INFORMATION CENTRES	23	14	17	10	16	22	102
WEBINAR 5 - PUBLIC HEALTH COMMAND CONTROL & COMMUNICATION	16	13	16	9	16	18	88
FOOD SAFETY TRAIN THE TRAINER (TTT) WORKSHOP	4	4	4	4	4	4	24
WATER SAFETY TTT WORKSHOP	3	4	3	4	4	4	22
CHEMICALS AND POISON INFORMATION CENTRES TTT WORKSHOP	4	4	4	4	4	5	25
PUBLIC HEALTH C3 TTT WORKSHOP	3	4	4	4	4	4	23
TOXBASE Training	17	3	20	6	5	22	73
						Regional Total	635
<b>NATIONAL TRAINING EVENTS</b>							
FOOD SAFETY	44	25	71			101	241
WATER SAFETY	21	21	44			57	143
CHEMICALS AND POISON INFORMATION CENTRES	47	17	56	24			144
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMAND CONTROL & COMMUNICATION C3	42	63	51			25	181
						National Total	709

PRECA numbers of people trained up to mid-2023.



Training session delivered under PRECA.

**EASTERN AND CENTRAL AFRICA**

Dr. Rey Chad Abdool

**Combating illicit trafficking and enhancing the safety of medicines in ECA region: Tracking MEDISAFE's progress**

Dr. Rey Chad Abdool

The threats posed by the spread of substandard and falsified medical products (SFMP) to public health and public safety are globally recognised, and include adverse health, economic and socioeconomic impacts for individuals and for society at large.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimated in 2017 that about 10.5% of medicines on the global market were substandard or falsified. A compilation of data undertaken by WHO in 2018 concluded that "the prevalence of

substandard and falsified medicines in low- and middle-income countries was 13.6% overall, with 19.1% for antimalarial and 12.4% for antibiotics. The highest prevalence of the SFMP was registered in Africa (18.7%). It was also estimated that African states imported 70% of their medical products, making them especially vulnerable to the risks of SFMP. The estimated economic impact ranged widely from \$10 billion to \$200 billion. SFMP affected people who have limited access to health care services or who are dependent on medical treatment for longer periods of time. Patients from developing countries are mainly affected by substandard and falsified antibiotics, antimalarials and analgesics, among others.

“ The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimated in 2017 that about 10.5% of medicines on the global market were substandard or falsified. ”



Substandard and falsified medical products.



Meeting on 'Development of a Reference Manual on Legislation on Substandard and Falsified Medicines and Health Products' in Mombasa, Kenya, May 2023.

Considering the cross-border nature of this phenomenon, regional and international coordination and collaboration are key in an effective response. Therefore, harmonisation of civil and criminal legislation of countries in a region is highly desirable. The African Union took measures to ensure such harmonization by adopting the African Union Model Law on Medical Products Regulation in 2016, and the Treaty for the Establishment of the African Medicines Agency (AMA) in 2019. However, since the adoption of the Model Law in 2016, new definitions of substandard and falsified medical products were adopted by the World Health Assembly in 2017, which lead to some gaps being identified in relation to the response to SFMP.

**Reference Manual on Legislation on SFMP with An African Perspective**

EU CBRN CoE Project 66 – MEDISAFE, implemented by Expertise France/ AFD Group, has made a significant contribution to support countries in their quest to address the trafficking and use of SFMP in a comprehensive

way. A seminal strategic document was developed within the Project with the full involvement of several international and regional institutions and experts in the area of legislation and medicine regulation, ensuring maximum consultation and concertation, a reliance on international expertise and best practices, and state-of-the art contemporary thinking.

Following several rounds of consultations, and at the specific request of Medisafe's partner countries, a consensus emerged to develop a Reference Manual on Legislation on Substandard and Falsified Medical Products with An African Perspective. The manual aims to inform countries to revise, amend or update their domestic legislation as regards to SFMP.

Two Expert Group Meetings were held in Seychelles, on 30 January to 3 February 2023, and in Mombasa, Kenya on 22 to 26 May 2023, for the development of the Reference Manual. These meetings involved national experts from partner countries and international experts

from the African Union, the African Union Development Agency - New Partnership for Africa Development (AUDA/NEPAD), the East African Community (EAC), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), WHO (Headquarters and Regional Office from Africa) and UNODC.

The Reference Manual provides comprehensive guidance on the necessary legislative framework to ensure an effective national and regional response to the risks associated with SFMP. It aims to identify the key rules and roles necessary in national legislation and make recommendations based on international and regional best practices. It is intended to assist African Member States in reforming their legislation in a comprehensive manner, while achieving regional harmonization to facilitate regional and international cooperation.

The Reference Manual includes a general introduction, followed by two main sections. The section dealing with the regulatory system is based on the African Union Model Law on Medical



MEDISAFE's overview in numbers.

Products Regulation of 2016, which aims to establish an effective and efficient system of medical products regulation to control and ensure that such products meet required standards of safety, efficacy and quality. The Reference Manual expands on that Guidance by highlighting issues relevant to prevention, detection of and response to SFMP while providing examples from national laws in an effort to address gaps and foreseen amendments to the Model Law. The Manual follows the nine regulatory functions as defined in the WHO Global Benchmarking Tool (GBT) for Evaluation of National Regulatory System of Medical Products (2021). It also makes reference to the role of the future African Medicines Agency, established by the Treaty for the Establishment of the African Medicines Agency (AMA) of 2019.

The section covering the criminal justice response describes the necessary offences to be established in criminal law to effectively prevent and respond to trafficking in falsified medical products; the necessary tools for the investigation and prosecution, including international cooperation in criminal matters; and measures for the protection of the

rights of victims, and to ensuring the safety of witnesses. This part relies on the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime of 2000, and the UNODC publication 'Combating Falsified Medical Product Related Crime: Guide to good legislative practices'.

For the first time, the document brings together in a comprehensive manner both the regulatory side and criminal elements related to SFMP, an useful addition to the existing tools. It is important to note that addressing criminal law in isolation is not enough, and the same is true for the regulatory action. The goal of the Manual is to assist countries in the process of reviewing their laws or policies in relation to SFMP, and aims to address existing gaps in policies, practice, and legislation. The Reference Manual highlights the importance of addressing the threat of SFMP, on the one hand, and ensuring access to medical products, on the other hand. It adopts the World Health Assembly definitions, which imply different approaches to SFMP. The functional areas of National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs) work were covered in the same manner as the WHO GBT 9 key functions, which will be helpful for NRAs

in the region working towards achieving a higher maturity level recognition from WHO. It addresses contemporary issues such as the on-line sale of SFMP, informal markets for medical products, and safe disposal of SFMP while considering environmental concerns. It also discusses the importance of reporting on SFMP and how to incentivize such reporting by professionals and by the general public.

Finally, the Reference Manual highlights the importance of cooperation at the continental, regional, bilateral, and national levels. It reflects on the adequate use of administrative rules, civil and criminal law, offences, sanctions and their respective elements and standards. On the criminal justice side, the distinction between substandard and falsified medical products is highlighted well as the need to address organized crime through serious and proportionate sanctions, including guidance for the prosecution of offenders, and the provision of compensation for victims of offences and those otherwise harmed by the use of SFMP.

# GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COUNTRIES

Heba Abdou Abdelhamid Mariey

## Train-the-Trainers Regional Conference on Medical Preparedness and Response to CBRN Incidents in the GCC region

Heba Abdou Abdelhamid Mariey

In an effort to mitigate the risks associated with Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) incidents, the European Union CBRN Centres of Excellence (EU CBRN CoE) initiated Project 82 which aims to enhance medical preparedness and response capabilities to CBRN incidents in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. One significant achievement of the project is the implementation of a "Train-the-Trainers Regional Conference on Medical Preparedness and Response to CBRN Incidents". The regional conference, held in Abu Dhabi from 6-17 March 2023, brought together participants from the GCC Partner Countries, including Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates. The event was jointly organized by the EU CBRN CoE Regional Secretariat in Abu Dhabi, co-sponsored by the Ministry of Interior in the UAE and the European

Commission, and hosted by the Abu Dhabi Civil Defence Academy.

The training primarily targeted first- and second-line responders from the ministries of health and civil defence who are directly responsible for managing casualties during CBRN incidents. These individuals play a critical role in safeguarding public health and security during emergencies of this nature. The aim was to equip them with advanced, specialized training on emergency medical assistance in CBRN disasters, enabling them to become trainers themselves and disseminate this knowledge within their respective countries.

The training was divided into two comprehensive 5-day modules. The first module focused on providing an overview of CBRN incidents, helping participants understand the unique challenges posed by such events. The second module delved into the practical management of injuries and the application of specialized CBRN medical assistance techniques. By providing a structured and in-depth

curriculum, the event aimed to build a robust network of skilled trainers capable of training medical response teams in their home countries effectively.

One of the significant outcomes of the conference was the establishment of a regional network comprising all participants, including first responders and institutions involved in medical CBRN emergency response. This network is vital for facilitating cooperation, knowledge sharing, and continued collaboration among the GCC countries.

Furthermore, in line with the objectives of Project 82, some GCC partner countries are also working towards implementing similar activities at the national level. This reflects the commitment to enhance regional medical preparedness and response capabilities to effectively address the threats posed by CBRN incidents.

### About Project 82

The overarching objective of P82 is to enhance medical preparedness and response capabilities to CBRN incidents in the GCC countries through the establishment or reinforcement of dedicated national training centers and through the implementation of train-the-trainers courses. These centers will contribute to develop a sustainable training framework in the region, establishing one, if not existing, or enhancing it where possible, to ensure a continuous national and regional capacity to train future generations of paramedics (1st line), doctors and nurses (2nd line) on the management of casualties related to CBRN accidents and incidents



Conference on Medical Preparedness and Response to CBRN Incidents, Abu Dhabi, 6 - 13 March 2023.

# MIDDLE EAST

Adil Radoini, Günter Povoden

## ARZ 2023: CBRN counter terrorism field exercise in Lebanon

Adil Radoini

A field exercise focusing on countering CBRN terrorism will take place in Beirut, Lebanon from 23 to 26 October 2023. The exercise is in line with the CBRN National Action Plan of the Republic of Lebanon 2023-2028, and will be developed under the patronage of the Lebanese Government with the support of the European Union Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Centres of Excellence Initiative (EU CBRN CoE).

The field exercise has been named 'ARZ' - meaning cedar in Arabic, the tree symbol of Lebanon - to reflect the solidity of the Lebanese institutions, which have shown commitment and strong resilience when reacting to the numerous challenges the country has been facing during the last few years, including those with a CBRN dimension such as the explosion at the Port of Beirut and the COVID-19 pandemic.

ARZ 2023 CBRN Field Exercise will be an opportunity to test and validate Lebanon's capacities in CBRN risk management during the last few years. It will also be a tool to measure the needs of the Lebanese institutions involved in the response to CBRN events, and to identify the areas that need to develop new capabilities. This exercise is part of a series of activities for the Middle East region that started with a first CBRN field exercise (ARZ 2021) two years ago in Lebanon, continued with a preparatory field training 'ARZ 2023' conducted on 23 May 2023, and will further develop with a follow up CBRN field exercise to take place in Jordan in 2024. The

preparatory work ahead of the ARZ 2023 CBRN Field Exercise included a preparatory field training day, conducted on 23 May 2023 with the support of UNICRI and SAFE Fondazione, as part of the closing ceremony of the CoE Project 73 - Protection of Critical Infrastructures. Subsequently, on 24 May a first in-person planning conference of ARZ 2023 gathered national CBRN authorities and international organizations supporting the event. An additional planning meeting took place in Lebanon on 7- 8 July, while the final planning conference was held on 13-14 September 2023 in Beirut, Lebanon.

The ARZ 2023 scenarios will mainly cover the capacities at the operational level, although taking into consideration some strategic aspects (e.g. response plans). Among others, it will focus on the management of leaks of chemical material triggered by a terrorist action; search for CBRNe materials, improvised devices and their components; detection, identification, sampling and investigation related to CBRN materials from a counter-terrorism perspective; extraction, medical treatment and decontamination of victims in a CBRN incident, with a focus on mass casualties.

### What Lebanese institutions will cooperate in the exercise?

- ✓ Lebanese Armed Forces
- ✓ Internal Security Forces
- ✓ Governmental Guard
- ✓ Presidential Guard
- ✓ Civil Defence course
- ✓ Red Cross



Preparatory field training day, 23 May 2023, Beirut.

**An international network supporting CBRN risk mitigation**

The EU CBRN CoE support to the ARZ2023 shows once again a great commitment to the needs of the CoE Partner Countries, and the Initiative's ability to adapt to different scenarios, designing at the same time tailored activities to effectively assess and develop CBRN risk mitigation capabilities.

ARZ2023 is led by the National CBRN Coordinator of Lebanon and CoENational Focal Point, Dr Bilal Nsouli, and is funded by the European Commission's Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI). The exercise is co-organized by the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), jointly with the support of the On-Site Assistance Expert for the CoE Middle East Regional Secretariat through the CoE Project 94. ARZ2023 is also supported by and designed in close coordination with the International Science and Technology Center (ISTC), the CoE Projects 73 – 'Protection of Critical Infrastructures', and the CoE Project 97 – 'Improvement of the Chemical Security and Safety in the Middle East'.

The exercise also benefits from the technical support provided by the Governments of Italy (which leads the evaluation process), France and Spain. Finally, several international organizations including the IAEA, OPCW, UNOCT, INTERPOL, EUROPOL, UNODC, UNODA and the League of Arab States are partners and support the exercise as members of the evaluation team or as observers.

**PHOTOGALLERY**

✓ **Discover the photo-gallery of ARZ2023 Preparatory days:**

<https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjAF9QY>



Preparatory field training day held on 23 May 2023, Beirut, Lebanon.



Preparatory field training day held on 23 May 2023, Beirut, Lebanon.



Preparatory field training day held on 23 May 2023, Beirut, Lebanon.



Lieutenant Colonel Salem Baker, Head of Secretariat for the Middle East region, at the EU CBRN CoE National Focal Points' International Meeting 2023, Brussels.

**New projects and MIE Regional Action Plan: Round Table Meeting**  
Günter Povoden

A Regional Round Table Meeting held on the 11th and 12th of January 2023 was the first one in the Middle East (MIE) region following the official nomination of Lieutenant Colonel Salem Baker as the new Head of Secretariat for the MIE region.

An essential part of the meeting was the presentation and discussion of MIE CoE Partner Countries' national priorities, which shall ultimately be reflected in an updated Regional Action Plan (RAP). For context, MIE was the first region to have such an action plan, in 2018. New projects will play a major role for CBRN capacity building in the MIE region, showing the relevance of the already existing RAP with all upcoming projects cover certain priorities highlighted in this document. The new projects for implementation are the following:

- **Project 89:** EUP2P Export Control Programme for Dual-use Goods – Middle East
- **Project 94:** On-site Technical Assistance to the EU CBRN Centres of Excellence Regional Secretariats, also known as 'Global OSA Project'
- **Project 97:** Improvement of Chemical Safety and Security in the Middle East, with the kick-off meeting organized in the framework of January's Round Table Meeting

**The Civil Defence of Jordan: A great host**  
Günter Povoden

Back-to-back with the RTM meeting, members of the CoE network were invited to visit the Regional Centre of Civil Protection established in Jordan, on the 11th of January 2023. The visit included a live demonstration by the Jordanian Civil Defence, and a simulation on a tool for CBRN Incident Management The CBRN incident management tool

allows to simulate a CBRN incident and to integrate different weather conditions and different scenarios in such event. It also offers the possibility to tailor the simulation to Jordan's specific critical infrastructure, making the simulation as realistic as possible. Provided by the US to the Jordanian Civil Defence, it will support team leaders in their incident command work.

The Regional Centre of Civil Protection may be considered as an international hub for knowledge-sharing on first response capacities. The Centre's academy offers various courses in different fields, such as security, safety engineering, disaster and crisis management, chemical engineering, hazardous materials, firefighting, etc. Some of the disciplines taught are organised as bachelor studies, while others are delivered at master's level. In addition, the academy organizes conferences aimed at sharing experiences in science and technology related to CBRN response.

**CoE Project 97 kicks off - Improvement of Chemical Safety and Security in the Middle East**

Günter Povoden

EU CBRN CoE Project 97 - Improvement of Chemical Safety and Security in the Middle East hold its kick-off meeting and first workshop in Amman, Jordan on 9 – 13 July 2023.

The meeting gathered delegates from the three CoE Partner Countries in the region (Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon), as well as UNICRI, the On-site assistance (OSA) expert and the project implementer staff.

The workshop was very successful and had the objective to adapt the project's roadmap to the different national needs, yet following a regional approach. It shall be highlighted women's representation within national delegations: the Iraqi delegation was represented equally by men and women, and one third of the Jordanian delegation was composed of women. Generally, all the delegates of the three countries showed a very high expertise, facilitating a successful outcome of the workshop.

CoE Project 97 aims to improve chemical safety and security in Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon during the period 2023 – 2025. Misuse of toxic chemicals and chemical terrorism pose a grave threat to international peace and security, especially in the Middle East, where there have been confirmed cases of use of industrial chemicals as chemical weapons, and the existence of unauthorised and ill-controlled storage or production of dangerous chemicals.

Whereas Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon differ in terms of implementation of relevant legislation and its enforcement, they share a common need for improvement of chemical safety and security at national and regional levels.

**How will Project 97 support the improvement of Chemical Safety and Security in the Middle East?**

- ✔ Increasing the capacities for chemical accident risk governance
- ✔ Identification of the chemical facilities of concern followed by a profound risk assessment and a comprehensive national risk management program
- ✔ Supporting the development of a database containing all relevant industrial sites, the chemicals on site and other safety related information
- ✔ Training of competent authorities to conduct inspections and establish appropriate control mechanism
- ✔ Defining procedures for the disposal of chemicals which are no longer used, in line with national and international regulations and best practices. This includes chemicals seized by border security, police or other authorities.
- ✔ Training of representatives of the industry how to create a chemical safety report and how to establish an internal and external emergency response plan.
- ✔ Proposals and suggestions how to adapt the legal framework accordingly

**The CBRN Conference for the Arab States**

Adil Radoini

The European Union (EU), the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), and the League of Arab States (LAS) jointly organized a CBRN conference for the Arab States on 30 and 31 May 2023 in Cairo, Egypt at the League of Arab States Headquarters.

The event gathered national representatives of the Arab Countries which are members of the EU CBRN Centres of Excellence (CoE), including National Focal Points, together with the representatives of those countries who are not part of the EU CBRN CoE network. The event was chaired by the EU, hosted by the LAS, and organized by the Middle East CoE Regional Secretariat.

The CBRN Conference for the Arab States witnessed the participation of 16 Arab States and allowed for an exchange of information on current and future activities, as well as relevant practices with regard to CBRN risk mitigation policies, with the aim to paving the ground for stronger cooperation within the space of the Arab region.

A strong focus was put on the EU CBRN CoE initiative and, in particular, on the achievements reached by the four regional secretariats covering the Arab states, namely the African Atlantic Façade, North Africa and Sahel, the Middle East and the Gulf Council Cooperation Countries. In addition, the CoE Heads of Secretariats and the National Focal Points highlighted the benefits of the CoE initiative and invited their peers to take inspiration from each other to tackle the CBRN risks that threaten the well-being of their societies. Overall, the participants praised the organization of this event as it allowed for increased awareness and a more connected network to foster national, regional and international cooperation.



Participants at the CBRN Conference for the Arab States, 31 May 2023, El Cairo, Egypt.

**Strengthening cooperation for CBRN risk mitigation**

Over the past twenty years, the threat of terrorist groups acquiring Chemical, Biological, Radiological or Nuclear (CBRN) materials has led governments and international organizations to adopt far-reaching regulations and programs to defend populations against the associated risks.

The concerns these programs aim to address have been fueled by a number of well-documented attempts by certain terrorist groups to acquire such materials. Other CBRN-related risks linked to natural or accidental events such as the COVID-19 pandemic and other recent epidemics, or the unsafe storage and transport of dangerous chemical substances, have shown to have dramatic impacts on our economies and everyday lives.

Safety and security risks connected to the use and misuse of CBRN materials require inter-agency and cross-border cooperation covering the whole spectrum of prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.

In this regard, the efforts that can be made by a single country may not be sufficient to tackle these risks, considering the transnational nature

of the CBRN threats. Countries can benefit from regional and trans-regional cooperation, and also to optimize resources needed to mitigate the risks connected to the use and misuse of CBRN materials.

**The CBRN Commission in Lebanon: The highest level of CBRN coordination and support in the country**

Günter Povoden

A real success story is the official appointment of Lebanon's CoE National Focal Point, Dr. Bilal Nsouli, and the CoE National Team as Lebanon's official CBRN Commission, to act under the authority of the Prime Minister.

Following the Prime Minister's Decision No. 228 of 2018 to establish a National Commission to "Implement Lebanon's Obligations towards the International Agreements Related to the Chemical, Biological, Radioactive and Nuclear Substances, and Management and Confrontation of the Risks of Weapons of Mass Destruction", a further step was taken to permanently appoint the CoE National Focal Point and the CoE National Team as Lebanon's CBRN Commission as per the decision of the Cabinet (Decision 63 of 2022) on "The Mechanism of Action" of the Commission.

This is a wonderful example of what a CoE Partner Country can achieve at the national level as a result of activities implemented with the EU CBRN CoE support.

The article list below provides a summary of the Decision 63 of 2022 that rules Lebanon's CBRN Commission in order to facilitate an example of good practices on how to create such a CBRN body. The translation of these articles, from Arabic into English, was funded and organised by UNICRI with the approval of Lebanon's NFP, Dr. Bilal Nsouli:

- ✔ **Article 1:** Naming the Members of the Commission
- ✔ **Article 2:** The Role of the Members of the Commission
- ✔ **Article 3:** The Chairman of the Commission
- ✔ **Article 4:** The Secretary and the Secretary Works
- ✔ **Article 5:** The Commissions Office
- ✔ **Article 6:** The Commissions Meetings
- ✔ **Article 7:** Substantive and Technical Meetings
- ✔ **Article 8:** Implementation of projects funded by donors (including training activities, in-kind donations of equipment and devices and the regulation about the steering committee)
- ✔ **Article 9:** Memoranda of Understanding and Cooperation with Local and International Agencies
- ✔ **Article 10:** Periodic Reports Related to the Commission's Work
- ✔ **Article 11:** Amendment of the decision to establish the Commission and the mechanism of work.

The endorsement of Lebanon's CBRN Commission by the Prime Minister and Cabinet facilitates the overall coordination of all CBRN related activities in Lebanon. In addition, the CBRN Commission may support the management of all CBRN incidents within the country □

# NORTH AFRICA AND SAHEL

Julie Busch, Youcef Hemimou, Anne-Sophie Lequarré, Elena Paladi

## Cross-border capacity for control and detection of CBRN substances in North Africa and Sahel: AVSEC Regional Exercise and Training of Trainers

Julie Busch, Youcef Hemimou, Anne-Sophie Lequarré, Elena Paladi

### AVSEC regional exercise at Niger's airport

As part of the EU CBRN CoE Project 55, aimed to strengthen detection and border control capacities for CBRN substances in North Africa and Sahel, a field exercise was held on 11 to 13 July 2023 in Niamey, Niger. Representatives of Algeria, Burkina Faso, Mali, Morocco, Niger, Tunisia, and Mauritania participated.

The first part of regional training, named AVSEC, was a visit to Niamey airport. Designed by the CoE National Focal Point of Niger, it included a visit to the border

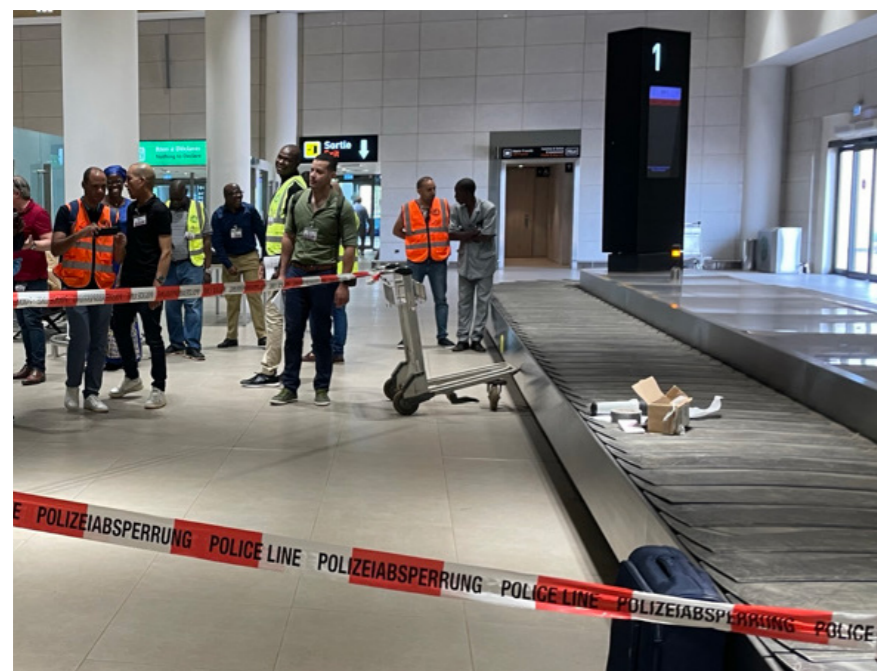
point under the guidance of local actors to understand the realities of air border traffic, and the management of luggage and passenger flows. This step allowed to understand the context in which the exercise would subsequently take place and adapt the CBRN training-awareness to the realities of the participating countries.

The second day began with a presentation of the AVSEC Serious Game and the holding of two tabletop exercises, organized on the theme of aviation security with a focus on the detection of CBRN substances.

The third day was dedicated to the field exercise in an airport environment. This final part illustrated the techniques of intervention and discovery of CBRN agents during a border control. The exercise consisted of several stages and scenarios. The participants had to proceed

to the screening of the passengers - in transit or not - and assess the detection of possible CBRN materials in their luggage. Protective and detection equipment allowed participants to identify a radioactive source in a passenger's luggage. The necessary synergy between services - customs, police, gendarmerie - was also the subject of specific development on the site.

AVSEC has achieved the objective of both raising awareness and training participants from major air platforms operating at international airports - i.e. capital, economic or tourist centers - in CoE Partner Countries, particularly, on various border control techniques according to the general principles of air security. This activity also aimed to strengthen cohesion between the countries of the North Africa and Sahel region on common practices for detecting CBRN threats on passenger flows.



Field exercise at Diiori Hamani International Airport, Niamey, Niger.



Field exercise at Niamey's airport, Niger.

“ AVSEC has achieved the objective of both raising awareness and training participants from major air platforms operating at international airports on various border control techniques according to the general principles of air security.



Train-The-Trainer session in Algeria, 31 to 3 August 2023.

### From the Train-The-Trainers to national trainings

The control and the detection of imports, exports, and transit of CBRN substances is the key element to prevent the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and their illicit traffic. In this context, since 2017, the CoE Partner Countries of the North Africa and Sahel (NAS) region, as well as Mauritania, have been engaged in the EU CBRN CoE Project 55 FRONSEC with the aim of strengthening cross-border capacity to control and detect CBRN substances.

CoE Project 55 FRONSEC - 'Strengthening cross-border capacity for control and detection of CBRN substances', implemented by Expertise France, provided a wide range of technical assistance to participating countries in order to advance CBRN border security, from the assessment of the legal system on trade of CBRN substances, to the provision of specialised training on border control for relevant enforcement authorities. FRONSEC was associated with the EU CBRN CoE Project 63 for the provision of spe-



Train-The-Trainer session in Algeria, 31 to 3 August 2023.

cialised CBRN detection equipment for personnel in charge of cross-border control in the NAS region, implemented by Paul Boyé Technologies.

To increase the sustainability of the capacity-building efforts implemented with the support of the CoE, FRONSEC organised a series of three "Train-The-Trainers" sessions aimed at increasing personnel skills at the national and regional level. This activity was essential to provide participants with the knowledge to become trainers in their respective countries during the national trainings.

The first TTT session aimed to develop and strengthen participants' knowledge in CBRN substances identification. The second session covered CBRN substances detection and the use of the associated equipment provided to Partner Countries. The third session focused on sharing a variety of key skills and tools for CBRN border control with frontline officers and other relevant stakeholders; e.g identification and verification of CBRN substances (illicit, dual use, etc.), supply chain security, etc.



The training on CBRN substances identification opened the TTT series by providing a complete overview of the definition of CBRN substances according to international and European regulations. For instance, on the Chemical field, all hazard pictograms that alert to the presence of a hazardous chemical were introduced; i.e. international hazard pictograms in the shape of a diamond, with a distinctive red border and white background. As mentioned during the training session, one or more of these pictograms might appear on the labelling of a single chemical. Others pictograms used on the transportation of dangerous goods were presented.

The training on CBRN substances detection aimed to build knowledge and skills on the appropriate processes to detect CBRN substances, and on the protection equipment that is used during these operations. With the support of Project

P63, through which the equipment was provided, this training component covered supply, delivery, unloading, installation, commissioning, and training of the equipment dedicated to CBRN preparedness and response, such as:



Chemical hazard pictograms.

UN HAZARD CLASSES AND WARNING DIAMONDS												
CLASS 1 Explosive substances and articles				CLASS 2 – GASES Flammable gas				Non-flammable gas				Toxic gas
CLASS 3 Flammable liquid	CLASS 4.1 Flammable solid	CLASS 4.2 Substance which, in contact with water, releases flammable gas	CLASS 4.3 Flammable on contact with water	CLASS 5.1 Oxidizing agent	CLASS 5.2 Organic peroxide	CLASS 6.1 Toxic	CLASS 6.2 Infectious substance	CLASS 7 Radioactive material	CLASS 8 Corrosive	CLASS 9 Miscellaneous		

Transportation hazard pictograms

- specific personal protective equipment (PPE) for CBRN agents (protective units and masks, gas masks, protective eyewear, gloves, boots, etc.)
- decontamination goods
- absorption and mitigation items
- chemical, radiation, biological detection and identification means
- sampling kits

Lastly, the training on border control of CBRN substances addressed profiling and identification issues, namely: what profiling is, how it is performed, and what role it plays in the daily work of the front line officers working at the border. Examples were given to facilitate this efforts, for instance, on procedures for document verification, action to be taken upon suspicious shipment, procedures for visual inspection of shipments, etc.



Radiological detection.



Radiological detection.



Chemical detection.

## THE RESULTS

The majority of the Train-The-Trainers sessions counted with the participation of officers in charge of border control, including customs, trade, police, gendarmerie, or civil protection. The cooperation between inter authorities and agencies was a real success.

### 100 participants

At least 100 participants have been trained to become trainers in the NAS region and Mauritania.

### 9 sessions

The trainers have in turn organised 9 sessions of national training in their respective partner countries. This stage is still ongoing until November 2023, the end of the project.

### Regional exercise

The trainings were put to the test during a regional exercise (AVSEC, please see next news article) on CBRN detection and border control at Niamey airport, Niger, involving all NAS Partner Countries

# SOUTHEAST ASIA

R. Alexander Hamilton, Andrew Proudlove, Robert Maker, Somsanouk Keobounsouk, Irma Makaliniao, Sabai Phyu, Marian Kolencik, Ľuboš Trudič

## CBRN CoE Regional Secretariat for Southeast Asia Celebrates 10th Anniversary

R. Alexander Hamilton

On 23 March 2023, the European Union Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Risk Mitigation Centres of Excellence Initiative (EU CBRN CoE) Regional Secretariat for Southeast Asia (SEA), hosted by the Government of the Philippines, celebrated its 10-year anniversary since its official inauguration in 2013.

Marking this special occasion, senior representatives from the Philippine Government, National Focal Points representing 10 Partner Countries from across the SEA Region, and officials from the EU and the United Nations (UN) gathered to celebrate 10 years of successful cooperation.

The event revisited the history and milestones of the CBRN CoE Regional Secretariat for Southeast Asia, showcased CBRN risk mitigation achievements of Partner Countries in the region, and featured a Simulation Exercise (SimEx) highlighting how interagency collaboration in the Philippines has strengthened the country's capacity to respond to CBRN emergencies.

The 10-year anniversary of the CBRN CoE Regional Secretariat for SEA celebrated the shared commitment of Partner Countries in SEA, the EU and the UN to work together towards a safer and more secure world.



National Focal Points Representing SEA Partner Countries at CBRN CoE Regional Secretariat for SEA 10th Anniversary Event, Quezon City, Philippines, 23 March 2023.



CBRN response simulation exercise, Bureau of Fire Protection National Headquarters, Quezon City, Philippines, 23 March 2023.



Left to right: Dr. Sabai Phyu, Prof. Irma Makaliniao and Ms. Somsanouk Keobounsouk share experience on regional achievements during CBRN CoE Regional Secretariat for SEA 10th Anniversary Event, Quezon City, Philippines, 23 March 2023.

**Final Delivery and Closure of Project 61: SEACHEM – Sound Management of Chemicals and their Associated Wastes in Southeast Asia**

Andrew Proudlove, Robert Maker

A chemical event, irrespective of its origin, can cause significant loss of life, and affect public health and the environment (acutely and chronically). The origin of the risk can be intentional (proliferation, theft, sabotage, and illicit trafficking), accidental (industrial catastrophes, waste treatment and transport) or natural (pandemics as well as natural hazards that cause the release of hazardous materials from chemical facilities, storage sites or transports). The management of chemicals and waste is a core element of international CBRN safety and security agendas. Chemical production, use and disposal continue to increase worldwide.

Commencing in 2017, EU CBRN CoE Project 61 ('SEACHEM – Sound Management of Chemicals and their Associated Wastes in Southeast Asia') sought to meet outstanding chemical safety and security needs in areas of legislation/regulation, prevention, detection, preparedness, and response. The primary project aim was to enhance the sound management of chemicals and their wastes, taking emerging chemical issues into account.

With in-country delivery disrupted throughout 2020-2021 due to the onset of the global pandemic, the project was granted an extension until January 2023. The final stages of delivery were conducted in the SEA Region throughout November and December 2022.

The P61 Team travelled first to Brunei Darussalam where, between 7 and 23 November 2022, experts representing implementing partners including Sustainable Criminal Justice Solutions (SCJS), the International Security and Emergency Management Institute (ISEMI), the UK Health Security Agency



Regional P61 Train-the-Trainer Course, Bali, Indonesia, November 2022.



Regional P61 Train-the-Trainer Course, Bali, Indonesia, November 2022.

(UKHSA) and the Dutch National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM) delivered a series of training interventions, workshops and seminars held at the Defence Academy and the Ministry of Health laboratory at Dewan Al-Afiah. The P61 Team was extremely grateful for the support of Brunei's CBRN National Focal Point, Mr. Haji Mohd Shafie bin Haji Jumatin, in facilitating and supporting the successful delivery of the training and workshops.

The team then moved on to Bali, Indonesia, where two Regional Train-the-Trainer Courses were held with delegates travelling from Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines. The first two days on trainer skills were held with all delegates. The course then split with specific input and training provided on 'Sound Management of Chemicals', delivered by experts from ISEMI, and 'Recovery and Remediation'

delivered by experts from UKHSA. These two events provided delegates with the skills and experience to prepare and deliver future training in their respective countries, ensuring sustainable delivery beyond the life of the P61 project, and provided an excellent opportunity to strengthen the regional network of trainers across SEA.

The Closing Event was held in Bali on 28-29 November 2022, capped off by a final Steering Committee meeting on 29 November. Although marking the ceremonial closure of P61, this event was followed by three remaining project deliverables that were conducted in Thailand. All three events were delivered in early December 2022 and included a laboratory workshop on 'Chemical Detection Possibilities' delivered by RIVM, a National Train-the-Trainer Course and a workshop on 'Response to Chemical Incidents', both delivered by ISEMI.

**Country-to-country training in Southeast Asia strengthens implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention**

R. Alexander Hamilton, Somsanouk Keobounsans, Irma Makalinao and Sabai Phyu

On 3-4 November 2022, cooperation between two countries in Southeast Asia demonstrated how regional expertise can be harnessed to help strengthen the implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC). During the two-day event dedicated to Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs) under the BWC, the primary mechanism by which States Parties exchange information relevant to the Convention, Prof. Irma Makalinao, a leading expert from the Philippines, worked with national authorities in Lao PDR to share tools and strategies for the annual submission of CBMs. Drawing on her experience

preparing CBMs in the Philippines, accompanied by virtual interventions by the BWC-Implementation Support Unit (BWC-ISU) and the Verification Research, Training and Information Centre (VERTIC), the training helped national authorities gain confidence in the CBM reporting process.

On 8 December 2022, during a side event on the margins Ninth Review Conference of the BWC, the Philippines-Lao PDR training on CBMs, supported by EU CBRN CoE Project 62 ('On-Site Technical Assistance to the Regional Secretariat in Southeast Asia'), was showcased as a model for intra-regional cooperation. Featuring presentations by Prof. Makalinao and Ms. Somsanouk Keobounsans, Lao PDR's National Contact Point to the BWC and Secondary CBRN National Focal Point, and with opening remarks delivered by Ambassador Leonardo

Bencini, President of the Conference, the training was recognised not only for its contribution to strengthening the implementation of the BWC through the CBM mechanism, but also for its capacity to leverage regional expertise to design and deliver technical support.

Ultimately, thanks to this training, Lao PDR successfully submitted its CBM report in advance of the 15 April 2023 deadline, demonstrating the country's commitment to the BWC and to the exchange of information on the peaceful use of biology. At the Ninth International Meeting of National Focal Points, held in Brussels from 14-15 June 2023, this achievement was celebrated as an outstanding example of how regional expert networks can both inform and drive the delivery of tailored trainings dedicated to strengthening CBRN risk mitigation.



"A Capacity Building Workshop on Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs) under the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC)", Vientiane, Lao PDR, 3-4 November 2022.



"Efforts to Strengthen the Implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention in Southeast Asia", side event on the margins of the Ninth BWC Review Conference, Geneva, Switzerland, 8 December 2022.

**What's the BWC?**

The Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) is the world's premier forum for States to affirm their commitment to the universal prohibition on biological weapons. The system of Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs) under the BWC is the primary mechanism by which States Parties exchange information on activities relevant to the Convention "to prevent or reduce the occurrence of ambiguities, doubts and suspicions and in order to improve international cooperation in the field of peaceful biological activities." Despite its importance, participation in the CBM process remains low, due in part to the need for greater awareness at the national level and for dedicated training on how to complete and submit annual CBM reports.

**Cambodia successfully demonstrates CBRN Response Team's preparedness during 2023 SEA Games and ASEAN Para Games**

R. Alexander Hamilton, Marian Kolencik, Luboš Trudič

In 2023, the Kingdom of Cambodia successfully hosted the Southeast Asian Games (SEA Games) and ASEAN Para Games. To ensure a safe and secure sporting environment during these major sporting events, the country counted on a multi-agency CBRN Response Team capable of responding to a potential chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear (CBRN) attack at Morodok Techo National Stadium and other critical sites that gathered large numbers of spectators.

To help Cambodia achieve this successful outcome, EU CBRN CoE Project 62 ('On-Site Technical

Assistance to the Regional Secretariat in Southeast Asia', P62), with the technical support of European Union (EU) experts from Slovakia's International Security and Emergency Management Institute (ISEMI), worked hand-in-hand with partners in Cambodia to help formulate national CBRN response plans and standard operating procedures, and to provide hands-on training and technical assistance over a period of six months.

On 31 March 2023, the tangible benefits of this long-term cooperation were showcased at a high-level event that demonstrated Cambodia's CBRN Response Team's enhanced capacity to rapidly identify and respond to a potential CBRN attack at Morodok Techo National Stadium. Bringing together national authorities from Cambodia's National Authority for the Prohibition of Chemical, Nuclear, Biological and Radiological Weapons (NACW), Ministry of Defense, alongside

relevant line ministries, the EU, the United Nations (UN), P62 experts and ISEMI trainers, this event featured tabletop and field exercises that validated the operational readiness of Cambodia's CBRN Response Team, a team comprised of front-line officers from NACW, the Police Security Department, the Police Fire Department, the National Gendarmerie, the Bodyguard Service of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Health, and the Central Security Department of the Ministry of Interior.

Thanks to this technical cooperation between Cambodia and the EU, in May 2023 CBRN security measures were successfully implemented during the SEA Games and ASEAN Para Games. Congratulations are due to the General Secretariat of NACW, and to ISEMI, which provided operational support throughout the Games, on this successful outcome.



NACW search and rescue team rescuing victims after a simulated chemical attack.



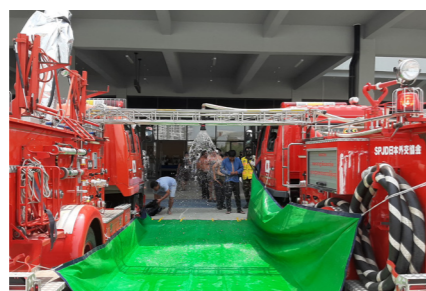
CBRN Multiagency Exercise in March 2023 at Morodok Techo National Stadium in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.



NACW sampling team carrying out sampling procedure after a simulated chemical attack.



ISEMI Experts providing operational assistance to NACW during SEA Games in May 2023.



Emergency mass decontamination provided by fire fighters.



NACW search and rescue team rescuing victims after a simulated chemical attack.

**Master Trainer Establishes Sustainable Chemical Response Training for Cambodian CBRN Response Team**

Marian Kolencik and Luboš Trudič

Chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) risk mitigation has fascinated Brig. Gen. Dr. Sat Chansovannary since the beginning of her career in 2018 at the General Secretariat of the National Authority for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (NACW) of the Ministry of Defence of the Kingdom of Cambodia. In November 2019, she participated in her first CBRN course, a National Training delivered by CBRN CoE Project 61 ("SEACHEM – Sound Management of Chemicals and their Associated Wastes in Southeast Asia", P61). Based on her outstanding performance, she was nominated for the P61 Regional Train-the-Trainers Course to be a Master Trainer for Cambodia.

During COVID-19, P61 organized online training activities in 2020 and 2021. During this time, Brig. Gen. Chansovannary used these online opportunities to focus on more advanced topics related to response to chemical incidents, including a comprehensive set of measures managed by multiagency response teams.

In May 2022, Cambodia hosted a P61 Regional Train-the-Trainer Course for Lao PDR, Cambodia and Viet Nam, involving theoretical, interactive and practical training. In addition to participating as a trainee to improve her teaching and technical skills, Brig. Gen. Chansovannary played a vital organisational leadership role during the event.

As a result of Brig. Gen. Chansovannary's outstanding performance, P61 Work Page 4 implementer, the International Security and Emergency Management Institute (ISEMI) from Slovakia, sponsored a study visit for her to

experience first-hand the CBRN capabilities of first responders in Slovakia and the Czech Republic. "This study visit motivated me to organize our own national implementation training with support of our trainers on the topic of response to chemical incidents and to make Project 61 sustainable in Cambodia," Brig. Gen. Chansovannary said.

Following her study visit to Europe, in October 2022, Brig. Gen. Chansovannary returned to Cambodia and led a national training course for the NACW CBRN Response Team on Response to Chemical Incidents. This training course will be repeated and provides an excellent example of sustainability

for the future. "I am very proud we managed to carry out our new training. It was a great honour to be part of this project and to cooperate with experts from the European Union," Brig. Gen. Chansovannary explained.

The P61 Team was led by Sustainable Justice Criminal Solutions (SCJS) from the United Kingdom with partners including the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), ISEMI from Slovakia, the Dutch National Laboratories from the Netherlands (RIVM) and the Verification Research, Training and Information Centre (VERTIC) from the UK. The Project was funded by the European Union



Brig. Gen. Sat Chansovannary leads national training course for NACW CBRN Response Team on Response to Chemical Incidents in October 2022 at NACW CBRN Institute in Cambodia.



Brig. Gen. Sat Chansovannary (middle) participates in P61 Regional Train-the-Trainer Course in May 2022 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

# SOUTH EAST AND EASTERN EUROPE

Mari Lursmanashvili, Sorin Popa, Talgat Toleubayev, Jumber Mamasakhlii, Samir Huseinbasic, Hendrik Visser, Elena Taberko, Andrew Proudlove

## Eleven CBRN regional priorities endorsed in the SEEE Regional Action Plan

Mari Lursmanashvili, Sorin Popa, Talgat Toleubayev, Jumber Mamasakhlii

Within the framework of the EU CBRN Centres of Excellence Initiative there are four regions which developed their respective CBRN Regional Action Plans (RAP). Namely, the Middle East (ME), African Atlantic Façade (AAF), Central Asia (CA) and South East and Eastern Europe (SEEE) regions completed this task with their own unique approaches. The SEEE RAP was unanimously endorsed by all CBRN National Focal Points (NFP) during the 18th NFP Round Table Meeting, held in Brussels on 16 May 2022.

The SEEE CBRN RAP will be a working document instead of a strategic document, which will be updated based

on changes of priorities and needs of the region. Unlike the strategic-level document, which requires official adoption by the government or high-ranking authorities, the working document does not require that type of approval. It was recommended that the adoption of the SEEE CBRN RAP will be sufficient at the level of the National Focal Points, who were officially nominated by their respective governments. The review of priorities may be initiated by any NFP during statutory NFP Round Table Meetings, conducted at least twice a year.

The purpose of the CBRN RAP is to provide the policy framework to guide the creation and maintenance of sustainable capabilities and common standards in chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) policies, programmes, equipment and training. The RAP serves as a regional

policy-guiding document that is able to capture the diverse set of governmental bodies and other stakeholders tasked with responsibilities in the chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear safety and security fields. The added value of the RAP includes in its capability to:

- Address regional needs through a single strategy,
- Build upon the existing Risks & Threats in the region,
- Take into account the gaps and needs related to CBRN safety and security,
- Promote deeper ties among the countries in the region,
- Serve as a tool of the Partner Countries to share common political aspirations,
- Potentially provide mutual support to one another in case of emergency.



SEEE 18th NFP Round Table Meeting, Brussels, 16 May 2022.



Eleven CBRN regional priorities endorsed in the SEEE Regional Action Plan.

The process of developing the CBRN Regional Action Plan (RAP) in the South East and Eastern Europe (SEEE) took more than 2 years. Intensive consultations and exchange of information with the relevant international organizations, regional stakeholders, CBRN National Teams and subject matter experts, allowed us to identify priorities, aimed to minimize the risk posed by CBRN materials and ensure safety and security of the region.

The CBRN RAP is not a substitute to other multilateral and bilateral initiatives, but rather a valuable addition, which, if properly implemented, could help to achieve national objectives in the field of CBRN risk mitigation with less financial and human resources. The added value of the CBRN RAP lies in strengthened regional cooperation and ties between the countries of the SEEE region. By implementing the RAP, the Partner Countries will continue to abide by the provisions of other conventions and regimes related to the fight against terrorism, proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and other unlawful actions.

The SEEE regional priorities identified by the National Focal Points, their respective National Teams and Subject Matter Experts include the following eleven areas, which will serve as a strategic guidance for donors, implementers and beneficiaries:

1. CBRN Risk Assessment
2. CBRN Capacity Building
3. Biosafety and Biosecurity
4. CBRN Critical Infrastructure Protection and security
5. Enhance Border Control of CBRN materials
6. CBRN National Legislation
7. Food Safety and Defense
8. CBRN Forensics Capabilities
9. CBRN Transport Safety and Security
10. Strategic Trade Control of Dual Use Goods
11. CBRN Public Awareness

Priority areas were put in such order, which starts with the most important areas on top and followed by other areas based on the assessment of partner countries' experts. Five of those

priorities will already be addressed during the implementation of two new regional and inter-regional projects. Other remaining priority areas will be the main focus for the Regional Secretariat in terms of attracting future funding, showcasing these areas to other donors, and serving as the basis for next regional projects.

“ The SEEE CBRN RAP will be a working document instead of a strategic document, which will be updated based on changes of priorities and needs of the region. ”



Participants at Bosnia and Herzegovina's 1st NAP workshop, Sarajevo, 29-31 March 2023.

**Speedy process of Bosnia and Herzegovina to harmonize CBRN National Action Plan with EU CBRN risk mitigation methodology**

Samir Huseinbasic

Bosnia and Herzegovina has taken firm steps towards the harmonization of its CBRN National Action Plan (NAP) with EU CBRN risk mitigation methodology. This has been achieved by completing a series of three workshops in Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the aim of reviewing and setting a complete list of actions relevant for CBRN risk mitigation in the country.

The development of Bosnia and Herzegovina's CBRN NAP lasted from June 2022 to May 2023, involving representatives from 20 ministries and other national agencies. The Plan comprises up to 56 actions for CBRN risk mitigation and 22 actions for the prevention and non-proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, to be implemented over 2023-2027. Based

upon recommendations from European Commission's Joint Research Centre, the organization and content of the Plan have been agreed within the National Team and among relevant institutions. The document is expected to be endorsed by the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina by the end of 2023, including previous agreements of Governments of Entities and Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The implementation of Bosnia and Herzegovina's CBRN NAP will vary according to the country's administrative and territorial needs. However, the Plan's harmonization with the EU CBRN risk mitigation methodology demonstrates the relevance of promoting cooperation between different partners and institutions, not only through the CoE network but also at national and local levels, including Brčko District.

We would like to express our gratitude to the EU CBRN CoE initiative for the support in developing the country's CBRN NAP and the work done towards

its harmonisation with the EU CBRN risk mitigation methodology. In particular, we would like to thank the CoE Regional Secretariat for South East and Eastern Europe, the European Commission's Joint Research Centre, and the On-site Assistance Experts, for the continuous support in this effort.

“  
The Plan comprises up to 56 actions for CBRN risk mitigation and 22 actions for the prevention and non-proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction.  
”

**Project 67: Implementing CBRN waste management activities**

Hendrik Visser

One of the key areas of CBRN Risk Management that repeatedly is included in the National Action Plans by the Partner Countries of the EU CBRN CoE, is waste management of CBRN materials. Given that improper CBRN waste management can have significant public health and environmental consequences, either short- or long-term, and, in some cases these materials could be used potentially for terroristic purposes, there is a general need to enhance the management of such materials.

In response to this identified need the EU has funded several CBRN waste management projects, including Project 67 'Strengthening CBRN waste management capabilities in South-East and Eastern European countries', which commenced July 2018 and completed September 2022. The project is implemented by an European consortium composed of SCJS Europe (Belgium), ISEMI, JAVYS (both Slovakia), Cranfield University, UK HSA and VERTIC (all UK), in close cooperation with experts from the Partner Countries.

The work under the project separated into four work packages: Assessment (WP1), Chemical and Biological Train-the-Trainer workshops (WP2), development of chemical, biological and/or radioactive waste management procedures (WP3), and best practices workshops and study visits (WP4).

Like all EU CBRN CoE projects the implementation strategy was heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. As result only the assessment visits (2018-2019) and study visit (May – July 2022) were conducted in-person, while the other workshops under WP2, 3 and 4, were conducted online. Although the general feedback from the partner countries' and P67 consortium experts was that had a preference for in-person over on-line workshops, there are some advantages



SEEE experts in full PPE for chemical waste management exercise.



Exercise in sampling and collection of unknown chemicals in a obsolete storage facility.

to conducting some activities online, such as, it allows for greater participation of Partner Countries and more in-depth, theoretical information can be provided

As result of the COVID-19 limitations, the consortium resolved to provide in-depth, online discussions on development of methodological documentations under WP3, and perform practical exercises and activities as part of the study visits under WP4 that were conducted near the end of the project.

**What are Project 67 Work Packages?**

1. Assessment
2. Chemical and Biological Train-the-Trainer workshops
3. Development of chemical, biological and/or radioactive waste management procedures
4. Best practices workshops and study visits

For example, under WP3 decision-making frameworks were developed for both chemical (sampling, remediation and disposal) and biological (sampling and decontamination) waste management issues, that allow partner countries' experts to develop problem-tailored plans to address waste management issues they are facing. As a follow up to the developed frameworks, a study visit was organised in Czech Republic 27th – 30th June 2022, which included discussions, exercises, and practical examples of the developed decision-making frameworks.



Practical exercises in sampling of chemically contaminated soil were conducted during P67 Study visit in Czech Republic, 27 - 30 June 2023.

For radioactive waste management, three guidelines were developed under WP3 on radioactive waste management facilities, management of disused sealed radioactive sources and other institutional radioactive waste, and mixed waste under WP3. These newly developed guidelines were further discussed during three study visits – Slovakia 30 May – 3 June 2022, Slovakia and Hungary 20 – 24 June 2022, and Serbia 25 - 29 July 2022.



Practical exercises in sampling of chemically contaminated soil were conducted during P67 Study visit in Czech Republic, 27 - 30 June 2023.

In retrospect this mix of online, in-depth theoretical lectures and self-study activities, and practical, in-person training used for the WP3 and WP4 activities would have been beneficial for the chemical and biological waste management train-the-trainer workshops conducted under WP2. However, due to the COVID19 restrictions this was not feasible. Nevertheless, based on the experience gained during the implementation of Project 67, this mix of online and in-person activities can be useful for future activities as it allows for greater in-depth theoretical training, as well as, it assists in the selection of appropriate (i.e. technical competent and highly-motivated) candidates for the follow-up in-person training.

✓ **Discover more on Project 67 website:**  
<https://preca.istc.int/en-l>



SEEE NFP's and CBRN Waste Management experts and P67 Consortium representatives at the Final Project Meeting, 7-8 September 2022, Tirana, Albania.

**Project 88: “Strengthening of CBRN Medical Preparedness and Response Capabilities in SEEE countries”**

Elena Taberko and Andrew Proudlove

The Majority of the EU CBRN CoE Project 88 participating countries, otherwise well-trained first-line medical and paramedical responders, and second-line hospital emergency staff and emergency medical managers, may not have the skills and knowledge needed to respond to a CBRN event.

Launched in 2021, CoE Project 88 contains a series of activities that will strengthen and empower CBRN Emergency Medical Preparedness and Response in the South East and Eastern European region.

In this news article, we offer an overview of Project 88's main achievements during the last year, the success stories, and the activities planned in the next year.

**Achievement during the last year**

- Regular online briefings for stakeholders.
- Completion of in-person, Fact Finding Visits (FFV) to Partner Countries.
- Confirmation of CBRN Emergency Medicine (EM) Training Centres and end users.
- All Partner Countries have agreed to Equipment Lists for their National CBRN EM Training Centres
- First meeting of the P88 Regional Technical Working Group (RTWG) in Istanbul in June 2022. Two local experts from each Partner Country now form a regional CBRN EM network that will meet regularly throughout the life of the Project.
- RTWG and National Focal Points (NFPs) approved and endorsed the Curriculum, Syllabus, and Standing Operational Procedures (SOPs) for P88.
- Regional Training Hub is the Emergency Situations Coordination

and Urgent Assistance Center (ESC&UAC) and has been equipped with essential CBRN EM equipment for the Regional Train the Trainer Course.

- The Regional Train the Trainer Courses at the ESC&UAC in Tbilisi in October 2022 delivered Theory and Practical Training for Partner Country Master Trainers and established a Regional Network of Master Trainers, ready to begin national training courses. <http://www.coe-project88.stcu.int/>
- Procurement and delivery of CBRN equipment to CBRN EM Training Centre End Users in Partner Countries is underway and forecasted in 2023. National training courses will follow.

**Success Stories**

- A Ukrainian CBRN EM medics team was trained at the Regional Train the Trainer Course in Tbilisi.
- The P88 CBRN EM SOPs have been translated into Ukrainian and distributed to Ukrainian Medical Staff.

**Activities in the next year**

- National training courses, mentored by Consortium instructors
- National and regional workshops, seminars, exercising, and testing to develop and check capabilities.
- Regional activities to strengthen health preparedness and response networks



See one!



Do one!



Teach one!



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## About the EU CBRN CoE

The European Union (EU) Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Risk Mitigation Centres of Excellence (CoE) is a global Initiative funded and implemented by the European Union as part of its goal to promote peace, stability and conflict prevention.

The aim of the Initiative is to mitigate risks and strengthen an all-hazards security governance in Partner Countries of the EU following a voluntary and demand-driven approach. The EU support is provided to implement a wide range of CBRN risk mitigation activities including needs and risk assessments, national and regional action plans, capacity building activities, legal framework reviews, table top and real time (including cross-border) field exercises, inter-regional exchange of best practices and lessons learnt.

The Initiative is led by the European Commission's Service for Foreign Policy Instrument (FPI), in close coordination with the European External Action Service (EEAS). The European Commission Joint Research Centre (JRC) provides technical support to Partner Countries, while the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) ensures a coherent and effective national, regional and international cooperation. Other relevant International and/or Regional Organisations and experts also contribute to the Initiative, which represents the EU's largest civilian external security programme.

For more information visit the EU CBRN CoE website at [www.cbrn-coe.eu](http://www.cbrn-coe.eu).

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CBRN Centres of Excellence Newsletter  
1977-2742 (online)



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Publications Office  
of the European Union