



EUROPEAN COMMISSION - PRESS RELEASE

EU partners discuss steps to reduce risks of hazardous materials

Representatives from eight different regions worldwide met in Brussels to discuss safety and security issues related to hazardous materials. It was the first ever meeting that representatives from 45 countries outside the EU dealing with these issues came together.

Lack of coordination and preparedness related to risks of Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) risks at national level and fragmentation of responsibilities within a region can have dramatic consequences. That is why the EU is setting up a framework for cooperation with partner countries. This initiative is mirroring the EU CBRN Action Plan implementation inside the EU.

During the meeting a tool was launched in the countries to identify their needs to respond adequately to risks and threats. This tool was developed by the Joint Research Center (JRC) – the EC in-house scientific service.

The work on CBRN risk mitigation is supported by EU Member States experts available to the partner countries concerned hence:

- reinforcing national CBRN policies;
- maximisation of existing capacities in the regions;
- facilitating interagency cooperation.

Best practices and lessons learned in the setting up the CBRN Risk Mitigation network were discussed as well as the results of implemented projects to strengthen for example border management, to establish emergency response mechanisms and to clean up chemical or biological waste. Working groups in a regional format illustrated the key role of the national focal points i.e. being the vehicles of the implementation of this EU Centres of Excellence risk mitigation initiative.

Last but not least, the meeting concluded with several live CBRN demonstrations performed by the Belgian Authorities illustrating in particular field chemical sampling, biological mobile labs and CBRN crisis management assets using small unmanned Aerial vehicles (UAVs) and satellites.

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More information:

Website of the CBRN Centres of Excellence – An initiative of the European Union
<http://www.cbrn-coe.eu/default.aspx>

Website of DG Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid – Instrument for Stability
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/finance/ifs_en.htm

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:327:0001:0011:EN:PDF>