



BS/WG/EM/R(2009)1

**REPORT OF THE
MEETING OF THE
BSEC WORKING GROUP ON COOPERATION
IN EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE AND LIAISON OFFICERS
OF THE BSEC NETWORK ON EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE**

Istanbul, 7-8 April 2009

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group (WG) on Cooperation in Emergency Assistance and Liaison Officers of the BSEC Network on Emergency Assistance was held in Istanbul, at the BSEC Headquarters on 7-8 April 2009.
2. The Meeting was co-chaired by Mr. Edik BARSEGHYAN, General Lieutenant and Head of the Armenian Rescue Service of the Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Republic of Armenia and by Mr. Viktor GALICIN, Deputy Director of the Department of International Cooperation of the Ministry of Civil Defense, Emergencies and Disaster Relief of the Russian Federation.
3. The Meeting of the Working Group was attended by the following BSEC Member States:
 - Republic of Albania
 - Republic of Armenia
 - Republic of Azerbaijan
 - Republic of Bulgaria
 - Romania
 - Russian Federation
 - Republic of Turkey
4. The representative of the Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution also attended the meeting as an Observer.

The List of Participants is attached as Annex I.

5. The Draft Agenda of the Meeting was discussed and adopted. The Agenda, as adopted by the Working Group, is attached as Annex II.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESOLUTIONS, DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND THE FOLLOW-UP OF THE DECLARATIONS AND JOINT STATEMENTS ADOPTED BY THE MINISTERS FOR EMERGENCIES AND HEADS OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

State of affairs with respect to:

a. the Agreement among the Governments of the BSEC Participating States in Cooperation in Emergency Assistance and Emergency Response to Natural and Man-Made Disasters and Additional Protocol to it

6. Eight BSEC Member States (Armenia, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Ukraine) signed and ratified the Agreement among the Governments of the BSEC Participating States in Cooperation in Emergency Assistance and Emergency Response to Natural and Man-Made Disasters. (Information is attached as Annex III)

7. The delegation of the Republic of Turkey informed that the Agreement was signed on 15 June 1998 and ratified by the Council of Ministers on 15 November 2005. The Republic of Turkey informed the depository country (the Russian Federation) about the ratification and the Agreement entered into force on 19 January 2006. The Working Group kindly invited the Russian Federation to inform the Member States and BSEC PERMIS about depositing by the Republic of Turkey of the instrument of ratification.

8. Nine BSEC Member States (Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine) signed the Additional Protocol to the Agreement, while ten BSEC Member States (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine) ratified it. (Information is attached as Annex IV)

9. The delegation of the Republic of Turkey informed that the Additional Protocol was signed on 7 June 2006 and ratified by the Council of Ministers on 1 October 2007. The Republic of Turkey informed PERMIS about the ratification on 27 November 2007. On 18 December 2007, BSEC PERMIS informed the Republic of Turkey that in accordance with Para. 4 Article 10 of the said Additional Protocol *“For each Party, ratifying, approving or acceding the present Additional Protocol, after the deposition of the third document of ratification, approval or accession, the present Additional Protocol shall enter into force, on the thirtieth day after the date of the deposition of the document of ratification, approval or accession by this Party.”* Accordingly, after the deposition of instrument of ratification from the Republic of Turkey, the BSEC PERMIS will inform all BSEC Member States on the date of entry into force of the said Additional Protocol with respect to the Republic of Turkey.

b. Nomination by the BSEC Member States of their representatives to the Working Group on Cooperation in Emergency Assistance

10. Ten BSEC Member States (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Turkey) nominated their representatives to the Working Group on Cooperation in Emergency Assistance. The Member States that have not yet done so were invited

to nominate their representatives to the Working Group, as it would facilitate a dissemination of information between members of the Working Group on Emergency Assistance. (Information is attached as Annex V)

c. Nomination by the BSEC Member States of their Liaison Officers to the BSEC Network of Liaison Officers on Emergency Assistance

11. Six BSEC Member States (Armenia, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Russia, Turkey) nominated their Liaison Officers to the BSEC Network of Liaison Officers on Emergency Assistance. The Member States that have not yet done so were invited to nominate their representatives to the BSEC Network of Liaison Officers on Emergency Assistance in order to facilitate the proper operation of the Network. (Information is attached as Annex VI)

Implementation of the Plan of Action and Work Program of the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Emergency Assistance for the period May 2007- April 2009

12. The Russian Federation presented a Report on the Implementation of the Working Program on Cooperation in Emergency Assistance for the Period of May 2007 – April 2009. (Information is attached as Annex VII)

13. The delegation of the Russian Federation presented information on the outcome of the “Training Seminar on Interaction of the BSEC Network of Liaison Officers in Condition of a Large Scale Disaster” (8-9 October 2008, Sochi, “Krasnaya Polyana”).

14. The delegation of the Republic of Armenia presented information and a movie on the Training Exercise on “Implementation of the Rescue Activities at Earthquakes” (1-2 December 2008, Gyumri) and the Conference “Lessons Learnt from the Earthquake in Spitak” (3 December 2008, Yerevan). A CD disk was disseminated during the meeting.

15. The Working Group:

- acknowledged the importance of achievements during the Russian Coordination in the said period. In particular, this period is characterized by the entering into force of the Additional Protocol to the Agreement among the Governments of the BSEC Participating States in Cooperation in Emergency Assistance and Emergency Response to Natural and Man-Made Disasters (5 July 2007), elaboration of the modalities of work for the BSEC Network of Liaison Officers on Emergency Assistance and commencement of work of the BSEC Network of Liaison Officers, organization of a number of international exercises on Emergency Assistance.
- underlined the importance of the exercises held in the BSEC Region on the Emergency Assistance and concluded that the practice of such exercises should be continued.
- concluded that the Action Plan and the Working Program for the said period were accomplished.

- highly appreciated the work done by the Russian Federation as a Country Coordinator for the said period.
- welcomed the intention of the Russian Federation to continue coordination of the Working Group for 2009-2011.

RESPONSE TO EMERGENCIES. PRESENTATIONS BY THE BSEC MEMBER STATES ABOUT THEIR ACTIVITIES TO PREVENT/OVERCOME EMERGENCIES

16. The delegation of the Russian Federation made a presentation, which is attached as Annex VIII, of EMERCOM activities discovering the following:

- Participation of EMERCOM of Russia in International Response Operations in the year 2008.
- International Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Operations
- EMERCOM of Russia Medevac Operations in December 2008, Israel and Egypt
- EMERCOM of Russia Humanitarian Relief Operations in 2008

17. The presentation described in detail the participation of the Russian rescuers in operations in China (12 May 2008, devastating earthquake), in Israel and Egypt (December 2008, traffic accidents) and many other operations world wide.

18. The delegation of the Russian Federation informed about the dispatching by its government of the immediate humanitarian assistance to Italy where a high degree earthquake hit L'Aquila (6 April 2009).

19. The participants of the Meeting expressed their sorrow to the Government of the Italian Republic and underlined the importance of further strengthening of cooperation in the field of emergency prevention and assistance.

20. The delegation of the Republic of Armenia made a presentation about an International Exercise "Armenia 2009" on Emergency Response to Earthquakes held on 23-26 March 2009, in Yerevan with the participation of rescuers from 22 countries and international organizations.

21. The exercise achieved its goal on improvement of interaction between assisting countries, UN OCHA and governmental organizations of the countries in need of assistance in disasters.

COOPERATION WITH THE BLACK SEA COMMISSION AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

22. The representative of the Black Sea Commission made a presentation on the “Overview of Black Sea Commission Activities in Environmental Safety Aspects of Shipping”, which is attached as Annex IX. The presentation outlines spheres where BSC and BSEC could cooperate.

23. She underlined the importance of regional cooperation, including states away from the Black Sea coast, such as the Republic of Azerbaijan, where similar environmental problems appear in the Caspian Sea. Better information flow between the BSEC Working Group on Emergency Assistance and the BSC ESAS AG (Environmental Safety Aspects of Shipping) will be an advantage. The cooperation should also be not only in exchange of information but in practice – as participation, for instance, in DELTA exercises.

24. She stressed that the better information exchange should be established in order to raise awareness about BSEC and BSC activities and not to overlap them. In this regard she presented information about major BSC events to be held in the nearest future and in which the BSEC countries could take part in. The events are:

- 27-28th of May 2009 – DELTA Exercise in Izmir, Turkey. Back to back the Steering Committee meeting for planning of the RODELTA Exercise will be organized (RODELTA-Oil Spill Preparedness, Search and Rescue Exercise, hosted by Romania).
- RODELTA – 24-28th of August 2009 in Constanta, Romania.
- 20th April 2009– deadline for submission of applications for the MONINFO Project (Environmental Monitoring of the Black Sea Basin: Monitoring and Information Systems for Reducing Oil Pollution, see www.blacksea-commission.org).
- BRAVO (communication) exercises in 2009: February 2009 (the Russian Federation), June-July 2009 (the Republic of Turkey), October-December (Ukraine).
- SAR Agreement Conference – hosted by the Republic of Bulgaria, tentative September 2009.
- AIS Regional Network (data exchange) – negotiations between the states will start in 2009.

25. The Working Group expressed its great interest in further cooperation with the Black Sea Commission and invited BSEC PERMIS to continue close collaboration with the BSC Secretariat and timely inform the Member States about the BSC events which would be of interest for them.

COMMENCEMENT OF WORK OF THE BSEC NETWORK OF LIAISON OFFICERS ON EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

Application of the Modalities of Work of the BSEC Network of the Liaison Officers on Emergency Assistance

26. The Russian Federation in the capacity of the Chairman of the Network addressed the issue of the necessity to activate the Network and to bring its work to the highest level of the operational activity. In this regard the delegation suggested that it would be reasonable to convene a high level meeting of authorities responsible for emergencies.

27. Furthermore, the Russian Federation reiterated an invitation to the Parties to the Additional Protocol, which have not yet done so, to nominate their Liaison Officers as soon as possible and inform other Parties via PERMIS.

28. The delegations stressed that the Network should become a strong and reliable tool for the quick response to disasters.

Creation of a Unified Database:

29. The delegations took note of the information of PERMIS that so far the Republic of Moldova, Romania and the Russian Federation provided information to the database of the Network as it was agreed at the “Training Seminar on Interaction of the BSEC Network of Liaison Officers in Condition of a Large Scale Disaster” (8-9 October 2008, Sochi, “Krasnaya Polyana”).

30. The Parties, which have not yet done so, were invited to provide their information to the database.

PRESENTATION OF PROJECT PROPOSALS

31. The delegation of the Republic of Turkey reiterated the necessity of collaboration of the BSEC countries on “Medical Rescue Teams Project” submitted by its Ministry of Health. Providing description of the project, the representative of the Republic of Turkey invited the Member States to take part in it. (The information was disseminated at the meeting held in Istanbul, on 28-29 March 2007).

32. The Working Group took note of the information provided by BSEC PERMIS, regarding the new Manual of Operations of the BSEC Project Development Fund (PDF) and particularly the fact that no project applications could be submitted until the introduction of a revised application format, expectedly in mid-2009, conforming to the new Manual.

33. In addition, the Working Group took note that according to the new Manual, it should define specific priority areas with corresponding timeframes for PDF project proposals, and submit these priorities to the Committee of Senior Officials for consideration.

DRAFT PLAN OF ACTION AND DRAFT WORK PROGRAM OF THE BSEC WORKING GROUP ON COOPERATION IN EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FOR THE PERIOD MAY 2009 - FEBRUARY 2011

34. The Russian Federation presented a draft Plan of Action of the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Emergency Assistance for the period May 2009-February 2011.

35. With regard to the draft Plan of Action, it was decided that the Member States will send their comments or proposals to the BSEC PERMIS before 1 May 2009.

36. If no comments or proposals were received by this date, the Member States take it that the Action Plan has been approved.

37. The WG approved its Work Program for May 2009-February 2011. It was agreed that the BSEC Member States may amend the Work Program with other activities if they represent interest for the Member States. Relevant proposals should be sent to the Member States through BSEC PERMIS. The Work Program as agreed by the WG is attached as Annex X to the present Report.

38. The Russian Federation informed that on 19-22 May 2009, it will host in Moscow an Exhibition "Overall Safety 2009" organized by the law-enforcement ministries. Modern rescue equipment of the Russian rescuers will be presented.

39. On 22 May 2009 in Noginsk, the Russian side will host a comprehensive exercise with the participation of the law-enforcement ministries of the countries of the Shanghai Organization of Cooperation. The invitations of the Russian Government to take part in the events will be extended shortly.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

40. No issue was raised under this Agenda Item.

DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

41. The date and venue of the next Working Group Meeting will be communicated to the Member States through BSEC PERMIS.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

42. The present Report was adopted and submitted to the 20th Meeting of the BSEC Council of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, to be held in Yerevan on 16 April 2009.