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**CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
TO THE CONVENTION ON THE TRANSBOUNDARY
EFFECTS OF INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS**

**MEETING OF THE PARTIES
TO THE CONVENTION ON THE PROTECTION AND
USE OF TRANSBOUNDARY WATERCOURSES AND
INTERNATIONAL LAKES**

**POLISH-RUSSIAN TRANSBOUNDARY RESPONSE EXERCISE
“KOTKI 2002”**

**AND THE INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON THE
PREPAREDNESS FOR AND RESPONSE TO INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS
AND THE MITIGATION OF THEIR TRANSBOUNDARY EFFECTS**

(Kętrzyn, Poland, 13-15 June 2002)

REPORT

Introduction

1. The Polish-Russian Transboundary Response Exercise “KOTKI 2002” and the International Seminar on the Preparedness for and Response to Industrial Accidents and the Mitigation of their Transboundary Effects took place from 13 to 15 June 2002 in Kętrzyn (Poland), near the border between Poland and the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation, at the invitation of the Government of Poland and the city of Kętrzyn.

2. The Transboundary Response Exercise and the Seminar were held under the auspices of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, within the framework of the

Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (Industrial Accidents Convention) and the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) and in cooperation with the Council of the Baltic Sea States.

3. They were organized jointly by Poland, through the Kętrzyn District Starostship, the National and the Kętrzyn District Headquarters of the State Fire Service, and “Eurochem Sp. z o.o”, and by the Russian Federation, through the Kaliningrad Region’s Main Department of the Ministry for Civil Defence, Emergencies and Elimination of Consequences of Natural Disasters (EMERCOM). The two events were held under the patronage of the Minister of the Interior and Administration and the Minister of the Environment of Poland and with the support of the Minister of Civil Defence, Emergencies and Elimination of Consequences of Natural Disasters of the Russian Federation.

Objectives of the exercise and seminar

4. The key objectives were to:

- (a) Strengthen the protection of human health and the environment against industrial accidents on both sides of the Polish-Russian border;
- (b) Provide a forum for the sharing of experience in introducing and implementing joint cross-border preparedness and response measures;
- (c) Provide a forum for the sharing of experience regarding civil defence organizations at the local level; and
- (d) Demonstrate joint response systems and procedures for mitigating the consequences of industrial accidents and other natural disasters.

Participation

5. The Exercise and Seminar were attended by some 80 participants from Poland and the Russian Federation and some 20 representatives of the following UNECE member countries: Armenia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Lithuania, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland, and Ukraine. A representative of the Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies at the Local Level (APELL) Programme of the United Nations Environment Programme also attended.

6. The participation of representatives of some of the countries with economies in transition was sponsored through the trust fund under the Industrial Accidents Convention.

Opening - welcome addresses

7. The opening ceremony was presided over by Mr. Marek Olszewski, Starosta of the Kętrzyn Starostship, who opened the Seminar by welcoming all the participants on behalf of the Government of Poland and the city of Kętrzyn.

8. The Seminar was addressed by Mr. Jacek Stawowczyk on behalf of the Voivod of the Mazursko-Warmińsko Province, Mr. Krzysztof Zaręba, Chief Inspector for Environmental Protection of Poland, Mr. Borys Dombrowskij, representative of the Governor of the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation, Mr. Gennady Korotkin, Deputy Minister of Civil Defence, Emergencies and Elimination of Consequences of Natural Disasters of the Russian Federation, Mr. Teofil Jankowski, Chief Commandant of the State Fire Service and Chief of the National Civil Defence of Poland, and Mr. Ernst Berger, Chairperson of the Conference of the Parties to the UNECE Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents.

9. The speakers stressed the importance of the Seminar as a forum to share experience in establishing and implementing measures on preparedness for industrial accidents and to effectively respond to their consequences. In view of some recent industrial accidents and their severe damage to human health and/or the environment there were still lessons to be learned about the prevention of, preparedness for and response to industrial accidents. They stressed the fact that the exercise was organized in a transboundary context and that the response effort would be undertaken by both the Polish and Russian rescue services. The hope was expressed that the Exercise and the Seminar would contribute to strengthening the transboundary cooperation between Poland and the Russian Federation on introducing coordinated preparedness measures and joint response mechanisms. The discussions should also serve to facilitate such cooperation in other parts of the UNECE region.

10. Mr. Berger expressed his appreciation to the Government of Poland for organizing the Exercise and Seminar and for bearing their costs as a contribution to the implementation of the work plan under the Industrial Accidents Convention. He also thanked the Government of the Russian Federation for its contribution, and in particular its participation in the joint exercise.

11. The participants unanimously elected Mr. Olszewski as Chairman of the Seminar.

International Seminar

12. Fifteen presentations were made by invited speakers at the Seminar (names of the speakers and the titles of their presentations are included in annex I to this report), which was divided into the following four sessions:

(a) Session 1 - Promotion of transboundary cooperation, aimed at increasing the safety of local communities, by multilateral and bilateral agreements and programmes;

(b) Session 2 – Identification and control of risk in industrial facilities – practical elements for transboundary safety planning;

(c) Session 3 – Operational and technical issues of responding to the transboundary effects of major accidents;

(d) Session 4 – Civil defence organizations at local level and the implementation of preparedness and response measures.

13. Each session was led by a Chairman (their names can also be found in annex I).

Polish-Russian Transboundary Response Exercise

14. The Polish-Russian Transboundary Response Exercise “KOTKI 2002” took place on 14 June 2002. The concept and the scenario of the exercise were introduced by Mr. Tomasz Nowakowski, Deputy Chief Commander of the State Fire Service of the Warminsko-Mazurskie Voivodship. They can be found in annex II to this report.

Conclusions and recommendations

15. The Polish-Russian Transboundary Response Exercise and Seminar were concluded by a round-table discussion during which the following conclusions and recommendations were endorsed. The participants:

(a) Appreciated the Polish-Russian transboundary response exercise and considered response exercises to simulated accidents and relevant training to be an important element of maintaining effective response capabilities. To this end, they recommended that further transboundary exercises should be organized within the framework of the UNECE Conventions;

(b) Stressed the need for establishing/enhancing bilateral cross-border contacts and cooperation at the national, regional and local levels, on preparedness for and response to industrial accidents and the mitigation of their transboundary effects. Contingency planning and agreements for the provision of mutual assistance should be developed between neighbouring UNECE countries. This practical approach will lead to greater safety and preparedness for industrial accidents throughout the UNECE region;

(c) Reconfirmed the crucial role of the UNECE Industrial Accidents Convention as a legal framework facilitating the development of bilateral cooperation on the prevention of, preparedness for and response to industrial accidents;

(d) To this end, called on all UNECE member countries that had not yet ratified the Industrial Accidents Convention to do so without delay to implement the Convention by transposing it to national legislation and to apply its provisions in practice. For some countries, ratification of both the Industrial Accidents and the Water Conventions were an important step in the process of their accession to the European Union;

(e) Stressed the significance of an efficient flow of information and coordination between different competent authorities at national level responsible for the prevention of, preparedness for and response to industrial accidents as a precondition for developing effective and mutually beneficial bilateral cooperation between Parties within the framework of the UNECE Industrial Accidents convention;

(f) Stressed the importance of rapid and efficient communication/ notification in emergencies. They recommended that consultations should be held within the network of points of contact within the UNECE Industrial Accidents Notification System – the early warning system under the Industrial Accidents Convention – in order to maintain its efficiency at the highest possible level. Development of cooperation with other early warning systems under different international river commissions was considered to be beneficial;

(g) Underlined the importance of reporting industrial accidents in order to learn from them and prevent similar accidents from happening in the future. To this end, they welcomed the information that the UNECE Past Industrial Accident Reporting System was established and was being operated under an agreement between the UNECE secretariat and the European Commission's Major Accident Hazards Bureau;

(h) Expressed its appreciation to the host authorities for their hospitality and the excellent arrangements made for the Exercise and the Seminar.

16. Mr. Sergiusz Ludwiczak, Secretary of the UNECE Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents, speaking on behalf of the Environment and Human Settlements Division of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and all participants, expressed his appreciation to the Government of Poland for organizing the Seminar and for providing excellent facilities for it. He also congratulated the Governments of Poland and of the Russian Federation, and in particular all rescue services, which participated in the very impressive and successful exercise.

17. The Seminar was closed by Mr. Olszewski and Mr. Ryszard Grosset, Deputy Chief Commandant of the State Fire Service and Deputy Chief of the National Civil Defence of Poland. They thanked the participants for their valuable input to the discussions and the events' successful outcome. They also expressed their appreciation to the UNECE secretariat for servicing and preparing the Exercise and Seminar.

Annex I

TITLES OF PRESENTATIONS AND LIST OF SPEAKERS

Session 1 - Promotion of transboundary cooperation, aimed at increasing the safety of local communities, by multilateral and bilateral agreements and programmes

Objective: The UNECE Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents as a legal framework for the development of cross-border cooperation and related activities such as the EUROBALTIC programme of the Council of Baltic Sea States as well as other programmes and bilateral agreements

Chairman: Mr. Jerzy Ludwiczak, Director of the Environmental Disaster Response Division, Chief Inspectorate for Environmental Protection, Poland

1. UNECE multilateral environmental agreements as advanced tools for transboundary cooperation: Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents

Mr. Sergiusz Ludwiczak, Secretary of the UNECE Industrial Accidents Convention, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

2. EUROBALTIC Programme as a framework for regional cooperation of the Baltic Sea States

Ms. Barbara Polak, Advisor to the Chief Commandant of the State Fire Service, Main Headquarters of the State Fire Service, Poland

3. Bilateral transboundary cooperation as an instrument for implementing the Industrial Accidents Convention – the Swiss experience

Mr. Ernst Berger, Head of Section on Safety of Installations, Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape, Switzerland

4. Bilateral agreements as a basis for cooperation between rescue services – the Polish perspective

Ms. Joanna Plichta, Chief Specialist at the International Cooperation and European Integration Department, Main Headquarters of the State Fire Service, Poland

Session 2 – Identification and control of risk in industrial facilities – practical elements for transboundary safety planning

Objective: Duties and obligations of national and local authorities, industry, local communities and specialized services in identifying and controlling existing risks and drawing up preparedness measures, with special emphasis on off-site contingency plans in a transboundary context and on informing the public

Chairman: Mr. Ernst Berger, Switzerland

1. Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies at the Local Level (APELL) of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) – a model for transboundary disaster prevention, preparedness and mitigation strategies

Mr. Ernst Goldschmitt, Senior Industry Consultant, UNEP/APELL Programme

2. Possible threats and sources of risk in the Kaliningrad Region on the borderline with Poland

Mr. Alexander Kulchitsky, Chief of Main Department, Regional EMERCOM Office for Kaliningrad Region, Russian Federation

3. Risk sources in the border area of the Warminsko-Mazurskie Province

Mr. Sławomir Różański, Inspector of Environmental Protection of the Warminsko-Mazurskie Province, Poland

4. Polish system of controlling the implementation of preventive measures for major industrial accidents

Mr. Paweł Janik, Head of Protection of Population Section, Main Headquarters of the State Fire Service, Poland

Session 3 – Operational and technical issues of responding to the transboundary effects of major accidents

Objective: The role of national and local authorities, and, in particular, specialized services in implementing response measures, with special emphasis on transboundary assistance

Chairman: Mr. Gennady Korotkin., Deputy Minister, Ministry for Civil Defence, Emergencies and Elimination of Consequences of Natural Disasters (EMERCOM), Russian Federation

1. Operational and technical means of the rescue services of EMERCOM used in transboundary rescue operations

Mr. Alexander Kursakov, Expert in the Department of Civil Defence Troops and Rescue Teams, Ministry for Civil Defence, Emergencies and Elimination of Consequences of Natural Disasters (EMERCOM), Russian Federation

2. National fire protection and rescue system – chemical and ecological rescue operations from the aspects of transboundary threats (on the example of transport of dangerous materials)

Ms. Anna Obolewicz, Chief Specialist, National Centre for Rescue Coordination and Protection of Population, Main Headquarters of the State Fire Service, Poland

3. Cross-border cooperation – a Swedish example of rescue service response to oil spills on land and waters

Mr. Claes Nicklasson, Deputy Fire Chief Officer, Swedish Rescue Services Agency, Sweden

Session 4 – Civil defence organizations at local level and the implementation of preparedness and response measures

Objective: The role and tasks of civil defence organizations at the local level in mitigating the consequences of major industrial accidents and diminishing their harmful effects on the public and the environment

Chairman: Mr. Ryszard Grosset, Deputy Chief Commandant of the State Fire Service and Deputy Chief of the National Civil Defence, Poland

1. Transboundary safety planning in Lithuania

Ms. Ausra Sablinskiene, Head of Population Protection Division, Civil Defence Department, Ministry of Defence, Lithuania

2. Contingency planning in a transboundary context - an example of cooperation between Hungary and Slovakia

Mr. Peter Roncak, Director, Hydrometeorological Institute, Slovakia

3. Role and tasks of district and municipal self-government in managing cross-border risks

Mr. Marek Olszewski, Starosta, Starostship in Kętrzyn, Poland

4. Aviation technology in response to forest fires and oil spills

Mr. Aleksiej Mazgavoj, Head of the Department of Prevention and Response to Incidents, Ministry for Civil Defence, Emergencies and Elimination of Consequences of Natural Disasters (EMERCOM), Russian Federation

Annex II

CONCEPT OF THE POLISH-RUSSIAN TRANSBOUNDARY RESPONSE EXERCISE „KOTKI 2002”

Principal activities carried out during the exercise by the units of the State Fire Service, Voluntary Fire Brigades, Border Guard, Police, medical and infrastructure services (including ambulance, technical and power engineering services and EUROCHEM Sp. z o.o.)

1. The main aim of the exercise is to mitigate and clean up the damage caused by a terrorist attack on the trans-shipping terminal in Kotki in which tank cars filled with liquid fuel, oil and gas transported from the Kaliningrad region to Poland are blown up. For the purpose of the exercise the terminal is used as both a freight and a passenger railway station. At the moment of the attack there are two trains in the station: a passenger train and a freight train. The freight train consists of six tank cars from the Kaliningrad region and the passenger train of five carriages from Poland.
2. As a result of the explosion, one tank car is damaged and another is derailed; there is a leak of fuel and a fire. The explosion also damages the passenger train. Twenty passengers are injured. Polish fire and rescue services evacuate the passengers from the train, evacuate all bystanders from the danger area, and give first aid to the injured.
3. As the Polish fire and rescue services do not have enough manpower, it is necessary to call on a rescue unit from the Kaliningrad region. The rescue unit from the Kaliningrad region arrives by train and puts out the fire on the fuel tank car and the passenger train with foam. The rescue units seal the damaged tank car and pump the fuel from the damaged tank car to temporary tanks. The rescue train puts the derailed tank car back on the track with a crane.
4. For crisis management purposes, regional (powiat) and provincial (voivodship) structures are involved in receiving and transferring information. They use their own decision-making procedures. Regional and provincial crisis management structures inform the national (central) structures – the National Centre for Coordination of Rescue and Protection of Population, which receives the request for additional rescue forces from the Kaliningrad region (rescue train).