

The background image shows a large-scale demolition or reconstruction site. A tall, partially destroyed concrete structure stands in the center, with significant damage to its facade. In the foreground, several yellow excavators are actively working on a pile of rubble and debris. The scene is dimly lit, suggesting an overcast day or early morning/late afternoon. The overall atmosphere is one of industrial activity amidst the aftermath of a major disaster.

Summary and conclusions of the UN/OECD seminar in follow-up to the 2020 Beirut port explosion:

*Lessons learned, challenges
and ways forward*

*Torill Tandberg,
Directorate for Civil Protection (Norway),
Chair of the UNECE Industrial Accidents Convention's Bureau,
Member of the OECD Working Party on Chemical Accidents*

Summary and conclusions

1. Strengthening implementation and compliance of legal and policy instruments addressing hazardous substances, incl. AN and AN-based fertilizers, and related accident prevention, preparedness and response is essential
2. Ensuring a multi-hazard approach to DRR and mainstream technological disaster risk management into national, local and sectoral strategies and plans in an institutionalized manner, backed by legislations and strong governance with the involvement of all stakeholders
3. Differentiating types of AN and AN-based fertilizers, their characteristics and behaviors needs to be understood and managed as these entail different hazards/risks
4. Continued emphasis on accident prevention – all possible measures to ensure safety need to be taken by national and local authorities, industry, stakeholders
5. Past accidents show that having good preparedness and response plans in place pays off when a disaster strikes – on-site contingency plans to be developed by industry and off-site plans by public authorities (with inputs from industry/operators and local communities), regularly tested and activated in case of accidents
6. National and local authorities, including land-use planners need to take the results of risk assessments into account to make informed decisions about siting of industrial installations and land-use plans, incl. in a transboundary context
7. Oversight and enforcement: Countries should ensure high levels of inspections are developed and maintained for the safe and secure management of hazardous substances

Summary and conclusions (cont.)

7. Intermediate/temporary storage needs further consideration, incl. on the interlinkages between regulations, implications for various authorities and various approaches to its management
8. Training is essential: Authorities, inspectors, workers, firefighters, other first responders, etc. need to be informed of hazardous substances, their risks and measures to prevent, prepared for and respond to related accidents
9. Information measures should target the public nearby hazardous installations (incl. in neighbouring countries), including how they could be affected by accidents and how to respond
10. Cooperation and coordination across national and with local authorities is essential given the number of regulations that apply and authorities that oversee AN and AN-based fertilizers throughout their lifecycles, as well as with industry, stakeholders and the public
11. Further experience exchange and knowledge sharing is important; International organizations have an important role in order to facilitate information and knowledge exchange, identification of good practices and supporting countries in policy-making, governance and training authorities and stakeholders

Actions & next steps: countries, industry, stakeholders

- ✓ Strengthen implementation of legal and policy instruments
- ✓ Raise awareness and understanding of hazardous substances and their hazards and risks
- ✓ Ensure resourcing for classifying and labelling AN and AN mixtures
- ✓ Enhance public information on hazards/risks of AN and AN mixture
- ✓ Ensure inspections have appropriate criteria and frequency
- ✓ Use/develop traceability and monitoring systems for hazardous substances
- ✓ Use international notification systems and assistance mechanisms
- ✓ Develop or review internal/on-site and external/off-site contingency plans
- ✓ Enhance coordination and training
- ✓ Share experiences, lessons learned, good practices with other countries, industry and stakeholders

Actions & next steps: international organizations

IOs stand ready to further support related efforts, aiming to strengthen implementation of legal and policy instruments under their auspices (subject to available funding):

- ✓ Further exchange of information and knowledge management, incl. through development of information repository on international legal and policy instruments for risk management of AN, and derived products; industrial accident prevention, preparedness, response; implementation experiences, lessons learned and good practices (UNECE)
- ✓ Update and expand the forthcoming 3rd edition of the OECD Guiding Principles for Chemical Accident Prevention, Preparedness and Response's section dedicated to port areas (OECD) and consider setting up another seminar dedicated to the management of hazardous installations at port areas.
- ✓ Continue emergency readiness and response services for accidents involving AN and AN-based fertilizers (UNEP/OCHA JEU)
- ✓ Mainstream technological DRR in national DRR strategies and action plans developed under the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR, UNECE)
- ✓ Strengthening countries' legal and compliance frameworks on occupational safety and health and chemical management, including in Lebanon based on the ILO's gap analysis

Thank you for attending the

UN/OECD seminar in follow up to the 2020 Beirut port explosion

Full conclusions will be made available soon at:

<https://unece.org/info/Environmental-Policy/Industrial-Accidents/events/358445>

Please complete the following evaluation form on survey:

- English <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/F2DW9JZ> or
- Russian <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FMP6C52>

