



BS/WG/EM/R(99)1

**REPORT
OF THE
MEETING
OF THE
WORKING GROUP ON COOPERATION IN EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE
*19 March 1999, Borjomi***

1. The First Meeting of the Working Group on Cooperation in Emergency Assistance of the BSEC Participating States, established in accordance with the Article 7 of the “Agreement among the Governments of the Participating States of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation on Collaboration in Emergency Assistance and Emergency Response to Natural and Man-made Disasters”, was held in Borjomi, Georgia on 18-19 March 1999.

2. The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Otar Tavelishvili, Chairman of the Department of Emergency Situation and Civil Defence, Ministry of Interior of Georgia.

3. The Meeting was attended by the following Participating States of the BSEC:

Republic of Armenia
Republic of Azerbaijan
Republic of Bulgaria
Georgia
Hellenic Republic
Republic of Moldova
Romania
Russian Federation
Republic of Turkey
Ukraine

The list of participants of the Meeting is attached as Annex I.

4. The Governor of the Borjomi Region, Mr. Vazha BERIDZE, addressed the participants of the Meeting by an honorary speech.

5. Mr. David APTSIAURI, Director of the International Economic Relations Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, addressed the Meeting on behalf of the BSEC Chairman-in-Office.

6. Mr. Evgeni BORISSENKO, Deputy Secretary General, addressed the Meeting on behalf of the BSEC PERMIS. The text of his statement is attached as Annex II.

7. The draft agenda of the Meeting was discussed and adopted. The agenda, as adopted, is attached as Annex III.

CONSIDERATION OF THE GUIDELINES OF THE WORKING GROUP

8. Under this agenda item, the participants exchanged views regarding the recent developments in the emergency cooperation and undertook the interaction in achieving ways and means of promoting decisions and principles reflected in the Multilateral Agreement on Collaboration in Emergency Assistance and Emergency Response to Natural and Man-made Disasters in the BSEC Region.

9. The experts discussed the priorities of joint cooperation in order to work out a Plan of Action on collaboration in Emergency Assistance and decided to submit the said Plan to the second Working Group Meeting for approval.

10. The delegations unanimously supported the idea of working out and adopting of the standard documents (questionnaires and forms) in order to ensure further progress in the implementation of the Agreement.

11. The participants called upon the Governments of the BSEC Participating States and the relevant international economic organizations to render assistance and support, including financial, for further development of collaboration in emergency assistance and emergency response to natural and man-made disasters.

12. The experts underlined the significant role of the regional and international institutions and agencies in the coordinated activities of the BSEC countries in case of natural and man-made disasters as well as establishment of closer contacts with the above organizations.

AMENDMENTS TO THE TEXT OF THE AGREEMENT AMONG THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE PARTICIPATING STATES OF THE BSEC ON COLLABORATION IN EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO NATURAL AND MAN-MADE DISASTERS

13. The delegations took note of the proposal of the Bulgarian delegation regarding amendments to the Agreement which was signed by the majority of the BSEC countries.

14. The Bulgarian Delegation suggested a new item 4 to be incorporated to Article 10 which will read as follows: "The customs arrangements shall be implemented pursuant to the relevant legislation in force."

This proposal was not accepted by the majority of the Delegations.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE CENTER IN GELENDZHNIK, RUSSIA

15. The participants inspected the proposal of the Russian Federation to establish the International Emergency Response Center in Gelendzhik as it was recommended by the Ministers during the Sochi signing ceremony on 15 April 1998.

16. The experts requested the Russian Delegation to submit more detailed information on this Center and taking into account the importance of the activity of this Center, to

introduce the list of the national forces so that they could be registered with this International Center. It was recommended that the Senior Officials in the sphere of emergency response, submit a list of their respective registered national forces.

17. All participating Delegations supported the proposal of the Russian Federation concerning the elaboration of the question of integration of existing national forces and facilities for rendering assistance as well as for the creation, on this basis, of regional forces for emergency assistance.

18. The Russian Delegation made a proposal that the PERMIS should distribute a working paper among the BSEC Participating States regarding the coordination activities in the field of Emergencies, using the existing relevant institutions in order to avoid parallelism in joint cooperation.

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE CHARTER ON HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION UNDER THE EMERGENCIES OF NATURAL AND MAN-MADE ORIGIN

19. The participants exchanged views regarding the working out of the above-mentioned Charter as a basic document of political and humanitarian nature of the WG on Cooperation in Emergency Assistance. It was decided that all proposals on this issue be submitted to the Russian Federation, the country coordinator of the said WG, in order that the final version of this Charter be prepared and further transmitted to the Jubilee Session of the Council of Europe on behalf of all BSEC Participating States.

CREATION OF THE COUNCIL OF INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR MUTUAL AID AND PEACE INITIATIVES OF RESCUE SERVICES OF THE BSEC COUNTRIES

20. The participants took note with interest of the proposal of the Georgian Delegation concerning the International Fund of Mutual Aid and Peace Initiatives of Rescue Services of the BSEC Countries and agreed that the setting up of the mentioned structure will be important for further cooperation as a whole.

21. The Delegations expressed their readiness for the further elaboration of this issue at national level and the presentation of this subject to the next WG Meeting in Athens.

CREATION OF COORDINATION CENTER OF THE NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS OF THE BSEC COUNTRIES ORIENTED ON PREVENTION AND ELIMINATION OF CONSEQUENCES OF NATURAL AND MAN-MADE DISASTERS

22. The need for financial assistance from the NGOs was stressed by the participants. For this purpose it was suggested to create a cooperation group within the framework of the WG on Cooperation in Emergency Assistance.

23. The Georgian side was requested to elaborate further the above proposal in order to consider it at the next WG Meeting in Athens, Greece.

24. The Delegation of Georgia also invited the participants to take active part in the implementation of the above-mentioned proposal and in this respect expressed its readiness to hold consultations with the representatives of the BSEC Participating States.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT OF SETTING UP OF THE BSEC CONSOLIDATED ENVIRONMENTAL FUND AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

25. The participants unanimously supported the initiative of extending the activities of the International Black Sea Environmental Fund (IBSEF) carried out in the framework of the “BSEC Ecomorsphera Marmara Center” and addressed to the representative of this Center, Prof. J. Reshetnikov, to submit for the next WG Meeting the Plan of Action of the IBSEF and to inform the BSEC countries regarding the activities of the said Fund before 1 July 1999.

26. The experts addressed the participants of the International Conference of the Managers of the Black Sea Ports, to be held on 24-25 March 1999 in Poti, Georgia, with the proposal that the Black Sea ports administrations render support to the IBSEF activities.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

27. The Experts took note of the information of the representatives of the Russian Delegation concerning the need of close cooperation with the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank (BSTDB) in order to enhance financial basis of mutual cooperation in the field of emergency. In addition, the Russian representative suggested that the PERMIS should appeal to the Bank authorities with the request of the determination of financial priority for cooperation in the field of emergency.

EXPRESSION OF THANKS

28. The participants expressed their gratitude to the Georgian authorities for the excellent arrangements of the Meeting and warm hospitality.

DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

29. The Hellenic Delegation proposed to organize the second WG Meeting in Athens, Greece in 1999. The exact date of the Meeting will be communicated through the Secretariat upon receipt of official information from the Government of the Hellenic Republic within two months.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

30. The Report was adopted for submission to the Thirteenth MMFA.