Regional Workshop for the Central Asian States Parties to the BWC on
“Strengthening National, Sub-Regional and International Capacities to Prepare for and Respond to Deliberate Use of Biological Weapons”
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Issyk Kul, Kyrgyzstan

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Strengthening implementation of Art VII/BWC

Workshop objectives: practical implications of Article VII/BWC:
- Preparedness
- Response
- International and regional cooperation

Participants: 45 national and international experts from Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, international and regional organizations (WHO, FAO, OIE, OSCE, EU CBRN CoE, and BWC-ISU)

Organisers: Kyrgyz Republic, OSCE Office in Bishkek, BWC-ISU, with funds provided by Government of Japan
Workshop Programme

• Session I: Introduction
  – BWC and Art VII
• Session II: Establishing national preparedness
  – National presentations and active learning sessions
• Session III: Regional and international cooperation to enhance preparedness
• Session IV: Table Top Exercise
• Session V: Enhancing preparedness within broader regional UNSCR 1540/CBRN initiatives
• Session VI: Wrap Up and Recommendations
Are we prepared?
Active Learning Session

• The main objective was to encourage the participants to actively contribute to a relevant technical discussion with respect to ‘strengthening national, sub-regional and international capacities to prepare for and respond to deliberate use of biological weapons’

• **Thematic discussions:**
  o Disease outbreak surveillance and epidemiology;
  o Education and awareness raising;
  o Cross sectoral cooperation; and
  o Regional and international collaboration.
Active Learning: Positive Outcomes

• Central Asian States Parties have similar structures and mechanisms in place to address natural disease outbreaks and deliberate bio-events;
• There are ongoing efforts and progress to further strengthen preparedness for both scenarios; and
• Active engagement in international and regional cooperation and assistance programmes.
Active Learning: Gaps

• Outdated infrastructure: need for enhanced diagnostic and analytical lab capacities;
• Incomplete legislation and regulatory frameworks: need for further development of policies, procedures, regulations;
• Insufficient co-ordination: risk analysis, need for national cross-sectoral coordination plans, communications strategies; and
• Lack of trained personnel: need more focussed TTX, case studies, operational trainings.
Table-Top Exercise

Simulation of selected stages of response process during a deliberate use of biological weapons (by a non-State actor):

- Exercise the rapid cross-sectoral assessment with limited information, to propose options for key decision makers;
- Exercise the planning of the response activities at the national level;
- Exercise preparation of a request/offer for the delivery of assistance; and
- Exercise the risk messaging to the public including rumor control.
Conclusions

- Workshop was a useful tool for national and regional capacity building for the purpose of Article VII/BWC implementation;
- Objectives of the regional workshop were achieved:
  - Better informed on current situation and follow up needs to enhance preparedness and response capacities;
  - Stronger need for cross-sectoral responsibilities;
  - Deeper understanding of differences between natural and deliberate incidents; and
  - Enhanced understating of relevant national and international mechanisms
- Combination of active learning, TTX, and presentations provided for 3-D review of what works, what needs to be improved, lessons learned, best practices, and what needs to be implemented; and
- It was very intense experience, which ideally requires more than two days.
Way forward

• It is necessary to consolidate a sustainable partnership led by the governments of all participants, based on mutual trust, openness and transparency in managing deliberate bio threats;

• Improve the flow and exchange of information and knowledge;

• Raising public awareness of the importance of preventive measures to prevent or mitigate any biological threat; and

• Develop a national plan on BWC
Workshop Evaluation

CONTENT

OVERALL EVALUATION OF THE WORKSHOP

Good 34%
Excellent 66%
Central Asian “RAKHMAT” to Japan and all stakeholders involved!
Thanks for your attention!