

PRESS RELEASE

Yerevan, 29 March 2017

Disaster Response Exercise EU MOLDEX 2017 – Part 1 - Decision Making

Natural disasters can strike anywhere, any time. Even the most well prepared country may find that its own rescue services are unable to cope with the situation and need assistance from other countries. The European Union has developed a mechanism to facilitate the international response to disasters. On 28-29 March 2017, the mechanism was tested in a decision-making exercise taking place simultaneously in six Eastern European Partner Countries, three EU Member Countries and the Emergency Response Coordination Centre of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism.

The arrival of international rescue teams at the site of a disaster is often shown on the news. What the news programmes never show is the intense international coordination, exchange of information, and decision making in many capitals that goes on prior to the actual sending of teams. As Part 1 of the international exercise named EU MOLDEX 2017, that decision-making was tested in a table-top exercise on 28-29 March 2017. To start the exercise, an alert message announced a major earthquake affecting parts of Moldova. The Civil Protection and Emergency Situations Service of Moldova decided that international assistance was needed, and the Crisis Emergency Management Centre sent a request for assistance to the EU Emergency Response Coordination Centre in Brussels. Brussels immediately contacted the capitals of the countries participating in the exercise: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Georgia, Romania, and Ukraine. In each of these countries, decision makers were gathered at the national crisis management centres and considered the request for assistance. Offers of assistance were made, the offers were coordinated by Brussels, Moldova decided which offers to accept, and questions about host nation support were discussed between the offering countries and Moldova.

“After the Spitak Earthquake in 1988 there was no proper coordination of the international assistance,” says Mr Mushegh Ghazaryan, Director of the Rescue Service, Ministry of Emergency Situations of Armenia, and PPRD East 2 Steering Committee member. “This exercise has shown that the international community has come a long way since 1988. We are grateful for the EU to organise the exercise and to serve as a catalyst for international coordination.”

The second part of the EU MOLDEX 2017 exercise will take place in September 2017, when rescue teams from the five other Partner Countries – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, and Ukraine will support Moldova. They will be supplemented with teams from three EU Member States: the Czech Republic, Denmark and Romania.

Background information

The EU-funded Programme on Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Natural and Man-made Disasters (PPRD East 2) is to contribute to the peace, stability, security and prosperity of the Eastern Partner Countries. It is also aimed to protect the environment, population, cultural heritage, resources and infrastructures of the region by strengthening the countries' resilience, preparedness and response to man-made disasters and disasters caused by natural hazards.

The PPRD East 2 Programme facilitates the strengthening of disaster risk management capacities at the national level in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. It enhances regional cooperation among the Partner Countries, and brings Partner Countries progressively closer to the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. The Programme will last for 4 years with a budget of €5.5 million.

For more info about:

PPRD East 2 Programme: www.pprdeast2.eu

Full-scale field exercise EU MOLDEX 2017: <http://pprdeast2.eu/en/civil-protection/full-scale-exercise-2/>



This Programme is funded
by the European Union

