



**Ispra, Italy, 13 June 2014** - A high-level meeting on safety and security issues related to hazardous materials was successfully concluded today in Ispra. The event brought together more than 70 participants from 53 countries across the globe. It took place from 11-13 June within the framework of the European Union Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Risk Mitigation Centres of Excellence (CoE) initiative. This meeting represents another step forward in the implementation of this unique initiative. As the Kenyan National Focal Point highlighted: “We are now transforming this initiative into a strong movement”, said Mr. Ali Gakweli.

During this 3-day event, National Focal Points of partner countries assessed progress achieved to strengthen coordination and cooperation. Roundtable meetings, focusing on regional priorities, projects implemented, and methodology, were organized for each of the regions involved in the initiative (African Atlantic Façade; Central Asia; Eastern and Central Africa; Gulf Cooperation Council Countries; Middle East; North Africa; South East Asia; and South East Europe, Southern Caucasus, Moldova and Ukraine). Today, participants joined working groups to provide feedback and brainstorm on possible ways forward for the governance of the initiative in terms of sustainability and scope extension.

The conclusion belongs to Mr. Mohammed Salami, Head of the CoE African Atlantic Façade secretariat in Rabat: “The regional and participatory approach of the EU CoE to define and then implement projects truly constitutes a model for our region”.

**About the EU CBRN CoE Initiative** - Mitigating CBRN risks of criminal, accidental or natural origin requires a high level of cooperation and coordination at international, regional and national level. The EU CBRN CoE initiative facilitates cooperation and enhances CBRN policies and capabilities by creating a network of regional initiatives to support the development of national CBRN policies. It is based on a voluntary basis and bottom-up approach where partner countries define their priorities and needs with a regional cross border dimension. The initiative aims at strengthening regional security by sharing good practices and capabilities, developing guidelines as well as identifying and deploying resources to respond to the needs identified by partner countries.

The meeting in Ispra confirmed the importance of, and the willingness to, develop an integrated CBRN approach that incorporates all international, regional and national CBRN components into a common strategy. This entails the adoption of a holistic approach through which all stakeholders, while operating autonomously, can create a security culture based on common learning and work together to mitigate the risks posed by the improper use of CBRN materials.

The EU CoE initiative is funded by the European Commission and implemented in cooperation with the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI). The European External Action Service is also involved in the follow-up of the initiative. The initiative is developed with the technical support of relevant international and regional organisations, the EU Member States and other stakeholders, through coherent and effective cooperation at the national, regional and international level. The initiative involves 47 countries in 8 regions of the world.

**For more information:**

- CBRN Centres of Excellence website:  
<http://www.cbrn-coe.eu/>
  
- DG Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid – Instrument for Stability website:

[http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/finance/ifs\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/finance/ifs_en.htm)