

EADRCC Executive Summary

REGARDING

FOREST FIRES IN ALBANIA, BULGARIA AND THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA¹

27 July 2007 11:00 UTC

ALBANIA

- Approximately 100 fires started burning in the week 18 – 23 July, affecting approximately 1,500 hectares of forest near the city Kukws in northern Albania (National Park of Valbone, near the border to Kosovo (forest of Germej) and near the Greek border.
- Albania sent a request for international disaster assistance on 23 July at 17:00 UTC, asking for aerial fire fighting capacities, because the use of standard fire fighting equipment is ineffective, since the disaster area is mountainous.
- All available resources, local and national, were activated to cope with the disaster situation – approximately 1,300 military personnel with 50 vehicles as well as an undetermined number of local personnel are being employed.
- **The situation throughout Albania continues to be very serious, since new fires have started and the existing ones continue to burn. There is an urgent need for firefighting resources in Albania, firefighting planes and helicopters in particular.**

BULGARIA

- Approximately 300 fires have been burning during the last week, affecting approximately 1.000.000 hectare. **The situation is still serious. Fires are spreading very fast and many populated areas are endangered.**
- **The State of disaster is still ongoing in 4 municipalities of the country. More than 100 fires are registered and part of them are in mountainous regions where the use of standard fire fighting equipment is ineffective. 9 fire fighters have been wounded and one citizen has died, 12 houses were burned. The largest fires near Stara Zagora city are still ongoing. Glasshouses and forest protecting belt in the municipality of Maglizh have burned.**
- On 20 July at 20:00 UTC, Bulgaria appealed for international assistance and requested 4 firefighting helicopters with buckets and 2 firefighting airplanes.
- The fire fighting efforts involve all available resources from local and national fire services, Civil Protection and the Ministry of Defence. Also private helicopter took part in the fire fighting efforts.
- The Russian Federation, on a bilateral basis, provided one IL-76 fire fighting airplane, arriving on 21 July. The airplane performed 18 fire-fighting flights, dropping 756 tons of water. On 24 July, the aircraft completed its mission in Bulgaria and was relocated to another theatre.

¹ Turkey recognizes the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name

- The Republic of Turkey, on 21 July, offered a fire-fighting helicopter, which has been accepted by Bulgaria on 25 July. However, in the meantime the helicopter has been already been sent to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia¹.

THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA¹

- The country is coping with numerous fires affecting approximately 3.000 hectares of forest in **21 municipalities**. The fires were endangering vital infrastructures and towns. The Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia¹, on 18 July, declared a national crisis situation. **On July 27 the situation is reported as serious with 20 active fires burning** out of control and new ones breaking out.
- On 23 July at 23:24 UTC, the EADRCC received a disaster assistance request from the former Yugoslav Republic of MACEDONIA¹ asking for aerial fire-fighting capacities.
- On 24 July, Croatia, on a bilateral basis, sent one Canadair fire-fighting plane. The aircraft was operating in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia¹ 2 days, **and was recalled to Croatia in the evening of 26 July because of worsened fire situation there.**
- On 24 July, Slovenia deployed one fire-fighting helicopter He 412-B. The assistance is provided on a bilateral basis.
- On 25 July, one fire-fighting airplane and one fire-fighting helicopter from the Republic of Turkey joined the fire-fighting operation in the stricken area.
- On 26 July, Austria 2 national experts from the Austrian fire brigades, arrived to the the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia¹.
- **On 26 July, Sweden sent 2 national experts to asses the situation .**
- **On 27 July, Germany deployed one fire-fighting helicopter in the stricken area.**
- **On 27 July, Estonia offered a financial support of 31 956 EUR intended for the procurement of fire fighting equipment.**
- **On 27 July, Poland, responding to the request of assistance donated fire extinguishing material (foam, hoses) and bottled mineral water. The assistance is scheduled to reach the stricken country on 29 July.**