



## Exercise “ZHETYSU 2009”

5-10 September 2009

### Report - 8 September 2009

Following the earthquake that took place in Kazakhstan on September 6, the focus of the Kazakh authorities is on rapid rescue of the casualties of this destructive disaster. International teams from neighbouring countries and other Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council nations joint their efforts to save lives and distinguishing the numerous fires..

The situation is aggravated by a number of severe after shocks affecting also areas that were so far not hit by the disasters. Consequently, people from those affected areas are seeking refuge and assistance in the cities not affected yet, thereby overwhelming the capacity of medical institutions and shelter.

In addition to causing numerous casualties, the earthquake also caused severe damage to the vital infrastructure of the country. Several very important power lines have been destroyed. The resulting power outages have consequences for economic and social life in other part of the country. Due to these outages the water supply of a chemical factory in Almaty is no longer working. Therefore, the cooling system in this factory is out and the chemical reactions are self accelerating. In case the water supply can not be restored quickly, a release of Ammonia, due to the overheating might be very likely within the coming hours.

Due to one of these aftershocks a rail tanker carrying chlorine derailed in a station, causing numerous casualties. Thanks to a quick reaction of a Chemical Response team, fatalities could be avoided.

One of the most tragic accidents today was a collision between two helicopters conducting aero-medical evacuation. The helicopters were carry patients who needed follow-on medical care from a regional hospital to a medical institution able to provide this specialised medical care. Due to so far unknown reason the helicopter collided in the air and crashed, causing numerous victims.