

NATO EADRCC consequence management field exercise

“Bosna I Hercegovina 2017”



Jointly organized by the **EADRCC** and
the **Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Lead in scenario

Initial disaster:

In early September 2017, heavy rainfall affected the wider area of northeast Bosnia and Herzegovina. By mid-September, rivers, lakes and reservoirs in the Sava River Basin were on the verge of flooding. On the 24th of September 2017, the River Bosnia and its tributaries flooded the region. Similar to the massive flooding of May 2014, the entire northeastern area of Bosnia and Herzegovina is affected.

The populated areas in Tuzla canton are heavily impacted. These areas include Tuzla city, Lukavac city, Gračanica city as well as settlements near Modrac Lake and along the river Spreča. The flash floods have triggered landslides on the slopes of urban and rural areas in the region. The landslides on Mount Majevisa have already damaged 40 residential buildings including houses, schools, local clinics.

The consequences are devastating. The total number of victims is still being confirmed but at least 20 people remain missing or unaccounted for. Over 160 houses are destroyed or damaged resulting in the relocation of over 1500 residents throughout Tuzla canton. Important quantities of livestock in the region remain threatened. The supply of consumable goods (food, water, milk, hygiene needs etc.) is heavily impacted as 15 bridges were severely damaged and many roads were destroyed. Due to slippery pavement many car accidents were reported in the wider area of the canton, particularly in the area of Lukavac, Tuzla, Živinice, and Srebrenik. Most likely, the fresh water supply is contaminated with sewage and industrial run-offs. Unsubstantiated reports of unexploded ordnance and mines were registered in several locations previously thought to be cleared.

The health system is backlogged due to the high number of injured people. Local and regional communities, still not fully recovered after the floods in May 2014, are struggling to cope with the situation but quickly becoming overwhelmed as they lack sufficient response capabilities. After activating national response mechanisms, a request for international assistance is being considered as likely necessary.

Second disaster:

On 26 September 2017 at 03:15 UTC, a Magnitude 5 Richter scale earthquake struck the wider area of Lukavac. The devastating earthquake lasted for 12 seconds and the effects were felt in the neighboring areas of Tuzla, Gračanica and remote places such as Živinice. The earthquake was not of great strength, but had a relatively shallow depth. It originated at a depth of 15 km, with its epicenter between the village of Bistarac and Šići. Initial reports indicate substantial damage to a number of older buildings, particularly from the 50s.

Seismologists predict powerful aftershocks which could result in additional damages to include the bursting of dams. The population remains on high alert as any dam breaks could result in catastrophic flooding from Lukavac to Doboje.

The consequences of the earthquake are still in the process of being confirmed but initial assessment indicates that approximately 30 people died with many more feared trapped. About 120 people are injured and many more are expected as recovery operations begin. An accident at the Đurđevik mine trapped many miners. Also, a technological accident was triggered by the earthquake in the industrial complex in Živinice, leading to release of hazardous substances. Public and private telecommunication infrastructures are heavily affected by the earthquake and landslides. This has an impact on the efficiency of rescue operations and public communications.

The authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina assess that there are not enough national response capabilities to deal with the two overlapping disasters and decide to initiate a request for immediate international assistance.

The international airports in Sarajevo and Tuzla are functional.

Specifically needed are response assets capable of water rescue, urban search and rescue, medical response forces, CBRN response forces, and international consequence management experts.