

**SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO  
NATIONAL DISASTER REDUCTION PROGRESS REPORT  
BASED ON THE YOKOHAMA STRATEGY AND  
PLAN OF ACTION**

**Background**

The protection and rescue system (Civil Defence) in the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) was established as a modern system in 1955. Two decades ago the Civil Defence system was completed both conceptually and organizationally. Civil defence in the SFRY was of a high standard and in accordance with the laws on civil defence of most Western European countries.

Disintegration of the former Yugoslavia and war threats initiated a change and adjustment of existing capabilities in order to meet the actual needs of the country, especially during the NATO intervention against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) in 1999.

When the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was transformed into a looser State Union of Serbia and Montenegro in February 2003, the new civil defence legislative and institutional structures at the state union level or the level of republics have not been in place.

**1. POLITICAL COMMITMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL ASPECTS**

Civil defence is today under the jurisdiction of the SaM Ministry of Defence and regulated by the old Federal Law on Defence (Official Gazette of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia number 43/94), and by the Regulation on the Organization and Capacity Building of Disaster Management Teams and on Civilian and Material Goods Rescue Measures (Official Gazette of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, number 54/94).

Although the current legislation contains certain elements of civil defence (measures, units, management), it is obvious that the Law on Defence has not covered civil defence comprehensively disregarding the reality this country has been faced with for the last fifteen years.

A clearly defined national policy or legislation in this field do not exist. Nevertheless, planning documents for the implementation of preventive and response measures on the national and local level have been developed within the Ministry of Defence. Apart from the Ministry of Defence, all relevant Ministries and organizations at the republican level normally dealing with protection and rescue have their own emergency plans.

A body coordinating civil defence and rescue activities of different governmental agencies has not yet been established at the State Union level.

The budgets of both governments of Serbia and Montenegro dispose of funds earmarked for disaster relief efforts, but they have not been allocated to any specific institution.

Non-governmental organizations, university and media are not sufficiently involved in disaster preparedness and disaster risk management. Only the Faculty of Civil Defence of the University of Belgrade has made disaster management part of its syllabus. There is no specific NGO in the State Union that deals with the disaster management issue.

## **2. RISK IDENTIFICATION**

The civil defence plan developed by the Ministry of Defence includes risk assessment as well as an evaluation of all potential hazards that may endanger people, environment and prosperity. Adequate risk assessments are made on the level of local self-government, too.

The MoD is leading a process of producing a risk assessment document and different organizations, companies and departments with responsibility for protection and disaster management (seismology, hydrology, environment protection ...) are also taking part in it.

A net of Information Centers at all levels of the State Union gathers all information regarding risk assessment and creation of the risk map. They also play a role in early warning of the public in case of a natural or man-made (technological) disaster.

### **Risk Map**

Serbia and Montenegro is situated in the central part of the Balkan Peninsula, having an area of 102,173 sq km and a population of 10.38 million.

The Republic of Serbia is situated at the central and northern part of Serbia and Montenegro with a total area of 88,361 sq km. Topographically, Serbia consists of: northern part - rich fertile plains, central and south-eastern part - ancient mountains and hills, and southern part - mostly plains with mountain ranges.

The population of Serbia is 7,498,001 (2002 census) plus 2,000,000 inhabitants of Kosovo. Population density is 105.4 per sq km. Highest population density is in Kosovo (145.5 per sq km), city of Belgrade and Pomoravlje. Population density is lowest in Vojvodina - 96.4 per sq km.

The biggest hazards in times of peace that may endanger the population and property are: floods, fires, earthquakes and industrial and chemical pollution accidents.

The main characteristic of the Republic of Serbia is high risk of floods. Floods may occur while the rivers burst their banks during fresh floods heavy rains, waste water and underground water surge. Vojvodina has the highest risk of floods. Flooded areas are mostly around rivers: Sava, Drina, Velika Morava, Juzna Morava and Zapadna Morava. There are over 500 settlements in these areas.

Seismic activity in Serbia is strong and frequent (magnitude from 7 to 9). Over 50% of the territory Serbia is likely to be afflicted by an earthquake having a magnitude of 7. Around 20% of its territory runs the risk of a potential earthquake of a magnitude of 8, mostly in some parts of Vojvodina and central and southwestern Serbia. The most risk-prone areas of Serbia with possible earthquakes the magnitude of 9 are situated south of Belgrade, around Kopaonik and in southeastern Serbia. The biggest risk is to people living in larger cities, due to high rises and overcrowdedness.

The risk of fires is greater in large urban areas, though there are also occasional big forest fires.

Dangerous substances used in the technological production process are also considered as hazardous. The heaviest chemical pollutants in Serbia are the following companies: "Zorka", Sabac, "Azotara", Subotica, "Matroz", Sremska Mitrovica, "Petrohemija", "Azotara", and Rafinerija nafte (Oil Refinery) in Pancevo, "Duga" Belgrade, "Prva Iskra" -Baric,

"Viskoza" - Loznica, "Milan Blagojevic" - Lucani, "Zupa", "Trajal" etc. Special dangers in peacetime are posed by accidents occurring during the transportation of toxic and hazardous substances. The most frequent causes of such accidents are collisions, over-turned fuel trucks, defective safety valves on tankers, used railway carriages containing oil, faulty railway switches, etc.

In assessing vulnerability of civilians, property and the environment as a result of effects of toxic and hazardous chemicals consequences of the NATO intervention in 1999. should be taken into account. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was bombed from 24th March to 10th June 1999 resulting in both direct and indirect consequences for the environment. Due to bombing raids waste in Serbia drastically increased: dropped bombs, destroyed and unexploded missiles, debris, destroyed and contaminated equipment in factories, polluted environment, toxic waste disposal on factory compounds, medical waste, etc. NATO airstrikes have had immediate and long-term consequences on the quality of water, sediments and water life, especially in the Danube river and Rivers Velika Morava and Lepenica.

The consequences thereof are still present on the local and regional level, directly or indirectly. It is difficult to estimate its long-term effects but the health and environmental risks have apparently increased due to the slowly degradable dangerous substances such as organochlorines and heavy metals (lead and mercury).

### 3. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

The State Union does not have a full information system network for Disaster Management and Reduction. Certain elements of this system have not yet been properly networked.

Specific theme based research and links between research institutions specializing in Disaster Management in emergency situations are non existent. Training in disaster management has not been included in school curricula either. However special protection and rescue training programs have been developed within civil defence units.

The State Union's institutions have both knowledge and experience in the protection and rescuing of civilians, environmental protection and protection of property. This fact is based on the history of the quality civil defence and the good practice that has proven to meet the highest standards over the last fifteen years.

#### **4. RISK MANAGEMENT APPLICATIONS**

Constitutional arrangements of the State Union (there are only five ministries at the Union level, covering such areas as foreign affairs, defence, human rights, international and internal economic relations), as well as the absence of a body to coordinate Disaster Management activities of the republican Governments' institutions and the lack of legislation at any level have caused the lack of a clearly defined institutional cooperation. The cooperation is being achieved at the operational management level within the Civil Defence Units, whose members are representatives of all relevant ministries and institutions concerned with rescuing and protection. Such management bodies are being set up at all levels of the State Union and cooperation between ministries (defence, environment protection, interior, etc.) is established through their representatives in the Civil Defence Units.

#### **5. PREPAREDNESS AND CONTINGENCY PLANNING**

Preparedness and contingency planning exist at all levels: from the State Union to the local government. Government bodies responsible for civil defence matters as well as organizations and departments normally dealing with civil defence have at their disposal funds and equipment to be used in contingencies pursuant to the present law.

Legally, civil defence is still under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Defence of the State Union, and the Ministry itself is accountable for the coordination of all activities related to protection and rescuing in case of disaster. In practice, coordination between the State Union Ministry of Defence and lower levels of organization of civil defence is in transition and without a capacity to absorb coordination functions. As a result, independent efforts are being made at the republican level, in both Serbia and Montenegro, to create republic-level disaster management units.

The Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government, in cooperation with the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) and the National Red Cross organization, has undertaken to assess 30 municipalities in Serbia that were identified as priorities on the national risk map; it has been revealed that those methodologies and approaches differ and that, for the most part, contingency plans have not been tested.

## **6. GOOD PRACTICES IN DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT-FRAMEWORK PROPOSALS**

Our recent experience in the field of legal, organizational, human resources and functional matters in cases of disaster indicate three possible models:

### **First: Establishment of a special Disaster Management Organization**

It is necessary to establish a special organization on Disaster Management that would encompass activities of civil defence and other bodies and organizations dealing with protection and rescuing. We would thus gain adequate administrative support that would eliminate causes of the above-mentioned problems. A separate disaster management organization exists in most countries that have an efficient civil defence and is usually linked to executive governmental bodies, from local self-government to the state level. A recommendation on the ideal model of Disaster Management was made in a declaration adopted at the Eleventh World Conference on Disaster Management in Beijing in 1998 (Appendix 1).

### **Second: Establishment of the Disaster Management Body within the Ministry of Interior**

The Fire Brigade as the pillar of the disaster management system is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Interior. Disaster management organization should be flexible in order to enable relatively simple involvement of this subsystem in the structure of the Ministry of Interior.

### **Third: Establishment of a joint Ministry for Environmental Protection and Disaster Management**

By establishing a joint Ministry for Environmental Protection and Disaster Management, the most important elements of the protection and rescue system would be administratively united. Activities in most cases are compatible and would enable transfer of all civil defence (disaster management) activities and Monitoring and Information Department in the new administrative framework. The Ministry for Environmental Protection and Disaster Management would thus have two entities that would cover basic activities. Administrative unity of these two activities would require an adequate human resources integration as well as pooling of financial resources and assets.

Disaster Management (civil defence) as a system should have a clearly defined role, organizational principles, tasks and elements used in theory and practice, based on the international experience and standards, and must be prescribed by the law. Regardless of the current and future administrative status of disaster management, we need to define it as an activity conducted by different government institutions, unrestrained by the social and political framework.

Ministry of Defence  
Serbia and Montenegro

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**Information on national contact and provider of info:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Position: \_\_\_\_\_  
Organization: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Serbia and Montenegro  
Address: Kneza Milosa 26, Belgrade  
State/Province: \_\_\_\_\_  
Zip/Post Code: 11000  
Country: Serbia and Montenegro  
Phone: 381113068885  
Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
Website: \_\_\_\_\_  
Was the information provided consulted with other institutions? NO  
If yes, please list these organizations here-below.

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