Report on Workshop B – Crisis management and emergency response

*Moderator: Mr. Pekka Haavisto MP Finland.*

**Summary**

There is a very strong social contract that states should make sure that vital parts of their societies should function also when serious crises occur. To be able to do that the ability to co-operate across sectors and borders must be strengthened as well as the ability to learn from previous crises and adapt what has been learned to new situations.

In the discussions it was emphasized that cross-border and cross-sectorial cooperation is difficult and contacts and methods must be developed well in advance; when a crisis occurs it is often too late. There are several networks to build on but no network covers all relevant fields and sectors so more co-operation at the meta level is needed.

*Multilateral crisis management: Professor Bengt Sundelius, Department of security and strategic studies, Swedish National Defence College.*

Mr Sundelius underlined that the challenges facing us today are more complex than ever. They often occur in a transnational environment and in real time; there is no time buffer for the responsible authorities to prepare. The countries and systems are technologically connected to each other. This increases vulnerability; there are also cascading effects that develop into new problems. The development of new mediums of communication makes the perceived pictures of the crisis important. At the same time a demand exists for good governance despite in parallel with a tendency of less government. All this amounts to a situation where multi-level, cross sectoral and multinational capacity building is necessary. The ability to co-ordinate different organizations and key functions becomes crucial. In order to achieve this it is necessary to understand the difficulties and why lack of coordination is such a common problem.

Professor Sundelius proposed a research based program for capacity building in the Baltic Sea Region, the program should go across sectors, borders and include both military and civil authorities as well as key decision makers. The program should be interactive and based on cases and lessons from actual crisis management. Some initial training events have been conducted between Finland and Sweden but it should be extended to the entire Region.
Comprehensive preparedness planning and crisis management- a new approach: Mr Henrik G Petersen Danish Emergency Management Agency.

Mr Petersen outlined two objectives of the Danish Emergency Management Agency's current work:
- To boost the overall quality of the preparedness program.
- To boost the overall quality of the crisis management capability.

To be able to do that they have used a needs based approach and identified seven areas that are crucial in order to reach the objectives. It is important to work with prevention, including both the soft tactical parts and the more hard technical solutions needed to prevent major crisis. There needs to be regular training and more extensive exercises. All activities need to be evaluated and the lessons observed must be included in the training to become lessons learned. More practical and user friendly contingency plans must be developed. The plans must focus on actual needs, be realistic, user friendly and be utilized also in training sessions.

In the context of the EUBSRS Mr. Petersen proposed that a network of crisis management experts should be established.

Protection of critical infrastructure: Mr Christer Pursiainen, Senior adviser CBSS secretariat

Mr Pursiainen explained that the term critical infrastructure comes from the US and has been more frequently used since the late 1990s. Some Member States has developed programs to protect critical infrastructure; Sweden, Finland and Norway are usually mentioned as good examples. The EU also has a policy for the protection of critical infrastructure. On the Baltic Sea level however there are no structures or programs working with this issue. Mr Pursiainen sees a definite need to develop structures also at the BSR level. There are several reasons why this would be logical:
- a lot of the critical structures are regional, like banks and the energy systems.
- there are some regional particularities like the weather and the Sea itself that sets the Region apart and makes it logical to co-operate on this level.
- co-operation in this field is very cost efficient especially for small countries.

An inventory should therefore be made to look into in which areas an increased co-operation would be most beneficial and needed. Based on the inventory some new expert groups and structures should be established.