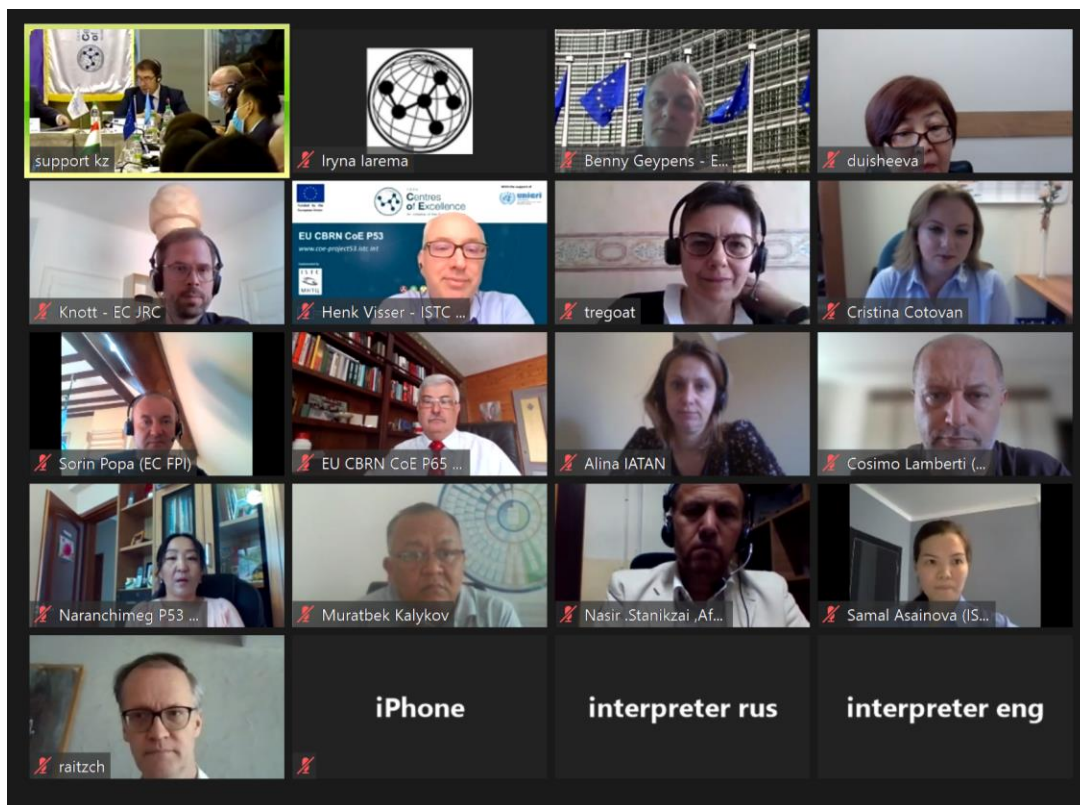


**European Union Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Centres of Excellence Initiative:
National Focal Points of Central Asia discuss regional priorities in CBRN risks mitigation during the
14th Round-Table Meeting**

1-3 June 2021, Almaty, the Republic of Kazakhstan





Within the framework of the European Union Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Centres of Excellence (EU CBRN CoE) Initiative, the 14th Round-Table Meeting (RTM) for Central Asia took place on 1-3 June 2021. The event was held in hybrid format: online and in person in the city of Almaty, the Republic of Kazakhstan, abiding by the COVID-19 safety protocols. It was the first RTM for the Republic of Kazakhstan, which joined the EU CBRN CoE Initiative in November 2020.

The meeting was kick-offed by H.E. Deputy Foreign Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan Mr. Akan Rakhmetullin, who welcomed the participants and emphasized that *“the Initiative’s forward-looking and unique approach of harmoniously combining the efforts of relevant government agencies, represented by health professionals, border guards and other rapid response forces, together with diplomats, will make a significant contribution towards preventing possible CBRN threats.”*

The Head of the EU Delegation to Kazakhstan, H.E. Ambassador Sven-Olov Carlsson, expressed appreciation to the Government of Kazakhstan for having agreed to host this important meeting in partnership with the Regional Secretariat for Central Asia, the European Commission and UNICRI. The EU Ambassador commended *“the Central Asia region for becoming the first one to have developed and to soon fully endorse the Regional CBRN Action Plan.”* An effective strategy to mitigate CBRN risks requires a high level of collaboration and coordination between different national agencies, countries, and regional and international organizations.

The Head of Central Asian Regional Secretariat, Mr. Bakhtiyor Gulyamov, congratulated the National Focal Points (NFPs) and their respective national CBRN teams and experts for their commitment, strong

involvement and advancements they have made in each partner country. He also noted the outstanding regional progress attained since the last RTM in October 2020, such as: the launch of the new Project 87 titled "Preparedness and Response for Mass Gatherings and other Health Threats in Central Asia - PRECA"; the completion of the Regional CBRN Action Plan; and the accession of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the EU CBRN CoE Initiative, which raised the number of the official EU CBRN CoE partner countries in the world to 62.

The event in Almaty brought together in-person and via online videoconferencing platform more than 60 participants: CBRN NFPs and representatives from the seven partner countries in the Central Asian region, namely the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan, representatives of the [International Science and Technology Center](#), the EU Delegations in the region, the [EC Joint Research Centre \(JRC\)](#), the [United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute \(UNICRI\)](#) and other organisations.

The meeting was an opportunity for the NFPs and other experts from the region to share the latest developments related to the national CBRN risk mitigation actions; discuss the current COVID-19 situation; and present key successes and challenges faced by the partner countries of the region during the COVID-19 pandemic. The meeting also featured discussions on the results and planned activities of the ongoing [EU CBRN CoE Project 53 on "Strengthening the National Legal Framework and Provision of Specialized Training on Bio-safety and Bio-security in Central Asian Countries"](#) and the [EU CBRN CoE Project 65 titled "Strengthening chemical and biological waste management in Central Asia countries for improved security and safety risk mitigation"](#). A special session was dedicated to the overview of the new EU CBRN CoE Project 87 PRECA and countries' priorities in the areas of: protection of food and water; improvement or development of Poison Control Centres; public health command, control and risk communication (C3), testing and exercising; and procurement and deployment of countermeasures.

The meeting also represented an opportunity to discuss the implementation of the Regional CBRN Action Plan for Central Asia, as well as the status of development of National CBRN Action Plans in partner countries. It also offered an excellent opportunity to discuss cooperation with other EU-funded projects, such as "Law Enforcement in Central Asia" (LEICA), and to get acquainted with the work of the Almaty-based [Masgut Aikimbayev's National Scientific Center for Especially Dangerous Infections of the Ministry of Healthcare of the Republic of Kazakhstan](#).

Background information:

The [EU CBRN CoE Initiative](#) is funded by the European Commission and implemented in cooperation with the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) and the European Commission Joint Research Centre (JRC). The European External Action Service is also involved in the follow-up to the initiative. The initiative is developed with the technical support of relevant international and regional organizations, the EU Member States, and other stakeholders, through coherent and effective cooperation at the national, regional and international level. The initiative involves 62 countries in eight regions of the world.