

CHAPTER 7 INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

The problems born by the Chernobyl catastrophe have a global character not only because of their negative consequences but also from the point of view of the large scale of measures that are necessary for their mitigation.

Effective overcoming of the catastrophe consequences can be contributed by constructive international co-operation, attraction of intellectual and material resources of international organizations, separate countries, scientific-research centers to the solution of the most complex problems that have arisen. Such collaboration is mutually beneficial. It gives an opportunity to increase significantly the scope of knowledge on ecological, economic, medico-biological, social, demographical catastrophe consequences and helps in accumulating of the scientific data and international experience on practical realization of countermeasures in conditions of wide scale radioactive contamination.

During organization of international co-operation on Chernobyl problems the Republic of Belarus adheres to the following principles:

- Scientific pluralism, due regard for alternative valuations, conclusions and recommendations of the experts;
- Diversity of directions and means of interaction;
- Mutually agreed participation of the three most affected states - Belarus, Ukraine, Russia in realization of international projects and programs.

In the resolution 45/190 "*International Co-operation to address and mitigate the consequences of the accident at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant*" adopted at the 45th UN General Assembly session (1990) organizational basis of international co-operation on Chernobyl problematic were fixed. These questions still are in the agenda of the UN major agencies. Basing on the list of assistance requirements prepared by the governments of the affected republics in March 1991 "A UN Joint Plan on International Co-operation to address and mitigate the consequences of the accident at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant" has been created. 131 project proposals demanding 646,5 mln. US dollars have been included into it. With the purpose of concentration of international efforts on the important directions of the catastrophe consequences overcoming there were the priority spheres of co-operation determined:

- Public health service: establishment of medical centres for examination and treatment of children and adults, complex equipment of medical establishments in the zone of contamination;
 - Economic rehabilitation: development of the documents, determining special economic conditions and stimulus for foreign investors;
 - Socio-psychological rehabilitation of children and teenagers;
- agriculture and foodstuff: manufacture of clean food products, baby food and those containing special additives.

Regretfully the plan has not been realized and only testifies to the scale of those problems that must be solved.

According to the Communiqué on the quadripartite negotiations of the delegations of the Republic of Belarus, Russian Federation, Ukraine and the UN Deputy Secretary General, the UN Co-ordinator on Chernobyl (1993), additional efforts on realization of the intermediate and long-term projects within the framework of the earlier agreed priority directions have been un-

dertaken. The Quadripartite Committee with the participation of the ministers of the "Chernobyl" establishments of Belarus, Russian Federation, Ukraine and the UN Special Coordinator has been established for more effective co-ordination of the wide-scale efforts of the UN programmes. Inventory of the UN Joint Plan projects has been conducted. The Republic of Belarus submitted 41 projects on the following fields: "Health", "Economic rehabilitation", "Socio-psychological rehabilitation", "Food and agriculture", "Environmental monitoring and clean-up", "Lessons from the Chernobyl experience". By today the following projects have been developed:

<i>World Health Organization (WHO)</i>			
Thyroid gland	Hematology	Epidemiology register	Cerebral affection in the womb
<i>International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)</i> <i>Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)</i>			
Technical report: Evaluation of radiological effects and protective measures	Prussian blue (Boluses use)	Radiation monitoring stations	Technical report: Countermeasures in Agriculture
<i>United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)</i>			
The industry condition review in the affected regions of the Republic of Belarus			
<i>United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organization (UNESCO)</i> <i>United Nations Children's Fund (UNISEF)</i>			
Centers for socio-psychological rehabilitation	School equipment and materials	Ultra-sound equipment and iodine capsules	Foreign languages training for the Chernobyl specialists

In May 1991 the World assembly of public health approved establishment of a voluntary financed International program on reduction of the effect on the population health in the result of the Chernobyl NPP catastrophe consequences (IPHECA) under the World Health Organization (WHO) auspices and has given to this activity an official status.

The World Health Organization provided the necessary equipment, significantly assisted in organization of informational provision and personnel training.

The result of the **UN Industry Development Organization (UNIDO)** mission was the base project of the "Review of the conditions of the industry in regions of the Republic of Belarus affected as a result of the Chernobyl accident" (November 1993 - February 1994). In the course of the project realization a detailed and objective analysis of the economic situation in regions affected by the Chernobyl accident consequences has been conducted. There were made 19 draft proposals, relating and perspective branches of the industry and enterprises of the affected regions.

Within the framework of the **UNESCO-Chernobyl Programme** in Belarus there have been established 3 centers of socio-psychological rehabilitation of the affected population (Ak-sakovshchina, Pershaj, Streshin. The Institute of Radiation Medicine was supported with medical equipment, school and sports equipment was delivered to schools of Gomel region. Assistance has been organized in foreign languages training.

The technical co-operation program with the **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)** includes projects dealing with the radiation monitoring problems, technologies of agri-

culture production on soils contaminated by radionuclides, strengthening of nuclear and radiational safety infrastructure etc. IAEA assists in training of personnel and organization of information exchange (there has been established a national INIS center, up to 20 scientists annually participate in international seminars, training courses, etc.). Besides, taking into account the specificity of this authoritative organization we would like to expect the increase of its interest to the problems of the consequences of the largest radiational catastrophe.

The assistance to the Institute of Construction had been rendered by **the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (HABITAT)** in application of new technologies and methods for planning and use of territories in connection with the resettlement of the population from the areas contaminated with radionuclides.

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) granted the ultrasound equipment for medical establishments of the affected regions of the republic.

Pursuant to *the Agreement on international co-operation on problems of overcoming of the Chernobyl catastrophe consequences*, signed in 1992 by **the Commission of European Communities** and the affected CIS countries, there are 16 actual research and experimental projects carried out jointly in the area of radioecology, radiation medicine, oncoepidemiological monitoring of the catastrophe consequences, biological dosimetry, and also on grounding of the counter-measures, to be accepted in case of nuclear accidents, development of computer systems for forecasting of radiological consequences of accidents, development of the decontamination strategy.

In the framework of **the TACIS-1993 Regional Programme for Support to Chernobyl Affected Regions** there are 4 projects realized in the republic now:

<i>Commission of European Communities, TACIS - 1993</i>			
Training Programme of Medical Staff Dealing with Thyroid Cancer Treatment	Defining and Implementing Measures to Improve the Production and Packaging, Storage and Distribution of Iodized Table Salt	Defining and Implementing Measures to Improve the Use of Contaminated Forestry Waste	Defining and Initiating a Business Development Agency in Gomel region

In accordance with the *Agreement on joint activities on minimization and overcoming the Chernobyl accident consequences*, signed by the Governments of the Republic of Belarus, Russia and Ukraine, it is planned to continue the work on maintenance of the information exchange between the three affected states, including creation of joint data bank on radiational conditions, population migration from these regions; introduction of the system of the population life activity support.

The Memorandum of mutual understanding with Germany (1994) has created a political platform for maintenance of the numerous private German initiatives, already rendering the significant help in the solution of the Chernobyl problems.

Germany is one of countries, that were the first to offer help to the affected by the Chernobyl NPP accident population of Belarus. German humanitarian help makes about 40 % from amounts, received by Belarus from abroad during the post-accident years, that includes: treatment of seriously ill children, shipment of humanitarian goods to Belarus (medicines, medical equipment, food products, etc.), organization of rest for children, financing of construction of rehabilitation facilities in Belarus and help in equipping and maintenance of such institutions, training of the doctors from the contaminated regions in German clinics.

According to the agreement on co-operation in thyroid cancer treatment people ill with thyroid cancer are treated in Essen. Collaboration with the children hematological center of the University clinic in Frankfurt-am-Mein develops effectively and dynamically.

In 1994-1995 21,600 Belarussian children improved their health in Germany. Main part of the children improve their health in German families on the invitation of public organizations, established with the purpose of rendering assistance to people affected by the Chernobyl NPP catastrophe.

Children rehabilitation center "Hope" ("Nadezhda", Minsk region) has been established with the assistance of the Committee "Leben nach Chernobyl" and organization "Mennerarbeit" of Kassel (Germany) Evangelic Church.

According to *The Memorandum of co-operation with Japan on the Chernobyl NP accident consequences minimization for the population health*, signed in Tokyo on April 18, 1991, there are scientific researches carried out, as well as exchange by the experts dealing with evaluation and reconstruction of exposure doses of thyroid gland and the whole body, epidemiological researches, preventive measures, diagnostic and treatment of thyroid gland diseases, pre-leukemia condition and leukemia itself.

The project **Chernobyl-Sasakawa** is carried out within the framework of the long-term programs on examination and study of the state of health of children living on the contaminated territories. The Japanese party delivered medical equipment, supply materials, vehicles to the Gomel and Mogilev regions.

Contacts with Holland in realization of the so-called "**Gomel project**" can serve as an example of fruitful international co-operation. Under this project a joint Belarussian-Dutch consultive-diagnostic polyclinic and health informational centre has been created in Gomel in 1991.

American charitable organization "**City Hope International**" together with its partner in Belarus - International Fund "Nadezhda-Ekspress" carry out large work on delivery into the republic of medicaments, medical products and foodstuffs, rendering assistance to the Chernobyl invalids and other requiring help. The significant assistance to this activity is rendered by the **US State Department** and the **US Ministry of Agriculture**.

In 1993 the joint Belarussian-American project was launched on cultivation and processing of rapeseed on the contaminated areas. For its realization the American party delivered necessary devices and equipment.

There was signed an agreement on co-operation between the **Research Institute of Radiation Medicine of the Republic of Belarus and National Health Institute (Bethesda, USA)** in studying cancer and other thyroid gland diseases of the population affected by radiation as a result of the Chernobyl NPP accident.

In 1993-1994 the Ministry of Agricultural production together with the British firm "Moushel" realized the project on optimization of the radiation control system of the agricultural production on the example of Kalinkovichi meat factory. **The Government of Great Britain** acted as a donor for this project. A radiological laboratory was delivered to the factory, the training of specialists was carried out in Great Britain.

Realization of the pilot project on construction of a mini-milk factory with a line for milk cleaning from radionuclides began in 1994. In 1995 the Government of Great Britain through the "know-how" fund allocated resources to the Ministry of Agricultural production for the development of the project feasibility report.

Within the frames of this report it is impossible to enumerate all the countries, organizations, all the people of good will who looked with attention, understanding and compassion at the problems born by the Chernobyl tragedy.

The people and the Government of the Republic of Belarus are very much grateful to those who rendered a helping hand during difficult years of the overcoming the Chernobyl catastrophe consequences. Within the framework of the assistance in overcoming of the consequences of the accident in republic in 1993-1994 various goods and medical preparations were delivered from **Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Israel, India, Ireland, Great Britain, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Russia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine, USA, Japan** and other countries.