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International and European Public Health Obligations vs Chemical Terrorism Threats

The Romanian Contribution Preventing the Use of Weapons of Mass Destruction

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**EU
GLOBACT**
TRANSNATIONAL CRIME AND EU LAW
towards **Global Action** against Cross-border Threats to
common security, rule of law, and human rights
Coordinator Prof. Dr. Anna Oriolo



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1. *What is at issue?*

The general framework of global tensions:

- *the escalation of conflicts in the struggle for power through war and mass-media;*
- *poor legislative regulation in relation to the evolution of biological and chemical weapons;*
- *lack of public information and public ignorance divert attention from the problem of these weapons.*



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The key challenges:

- *balancing public health rights in compliance with International, European obligations and national security;*
- *ensuring AAAQ framework: Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability and Quality;*
- *building the legal, medical and institutional structures to prevent and to respond.*



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2. *When did it take place?*

The historical and future outlook:

- *accession and ratification of key international treaties: Geneva Protocol (1925), ECHR (1950), BWC (1972), CWC (1997);*
- *regular training exercises and simulations: Exercise Gema Bhakti (Indonesia, 2018), Exercise Cobra Gold (Thailand, 2019), Exercise Toxic Valley (Slovakia, 2018) focused on Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) response;*
- *the need to update continuously national and international legislation to prevent biological and chemical terrorism.*



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3. *Where did it take place?*

Global context:

- *international cooperation through UN, WHO and EU platforms (Security Council, General Assembly, International Health Regulations, European Commission, Council of the EU etc.);*
- *cross-border collaboration to combat WMD (Weapons of Mass Destruction) threats;*
- *Romania's proximity to conflict zones and potential threats in Eastern Europe.*



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National context:

- *Romania's borders and critical infrastructures as strategic points of interest ;*
- *national health system and emergency response teams actively involved;*
- *common border with a belligerent country in the conflict in Eastern Europe.*



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4. *Why is it important?*

Addressing chemical terrorism serves to:

- *protect public health and safety in accordance with international obligations;*
- *prevent the use of dangerous chemicals by terrorist groups;*
- *reduce potential casualties through international cooperation for global public health protection.*



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5. *How will it be achieved?*

Implementation of legal frameworks:

- *national adoption of international treaties and EU regulations;*
- *establishing agencies and protocols for chemical threat management;*
- *continuous training of health professionals.*



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Coordination and cooperation:

- *collaborations between public health, defense and intelligence sectors;*
- *international partnerships and knowledge sharing (e.g. UNODC efforts);*
- *simulation exercises and real-time scenario planning to assess preparedness.*



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6. *Who is involved?*

International entities:

- *United Nations (UN);*
- *World Health Organization (WHO);*
- *European Union (EU).*



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Interested national parties:

- *Romanian government and national agencies: the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the National Agency for Environmental Protection (ANPM) etc.;*
- *public and health workers at risk from chemical terrorism;*
- *medical and emergency response teams.*



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7. *The scope of the study*

Areas of interest in:

- *legal frameworks: national and international;*
- *public health implications of the use of chemical and biological weapons;*
- *Romania's role and contributions in global cooperation and preventive measures.*



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8. Legal *framework*

European Legislation:

- *Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union;*
- *Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU);*
- *European Social Charter.*



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National Legislation:

- *Romanian Constitution;*
- *Law 95/2006 on health reform;*
- *Law 46/2003 on rights to health care.*



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9. Public health *implications*

Regulations on laboratories and the use of chemicals target:

- *authorization, safety and surveillance;*
- *public right to information;*
- *international cooperation in public health.*



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Role of WHO:

- *monitoring outbreaks and chemical threats;*
- *cooperation with the Ministry of Health in chemical emergencies;*
- *collaboration with national public health institutions.*



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National institutions with a role in health regulation:

- *The National Agency for Medicines and Medical Devices in Romania (ANMDDMR) with role in policies for medicines, medical devices and technologies;*
- *National Agency for Environmental Protection (ANPM) for policies of environmental protection;*
- *National Institute of Public Health (INSP) and National Statistical Institute (NSI) for public health policies and strategies using demographic data.*



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10. Chemical terrorism:

Case studies:

- *The chemical attack in Halabja, Iraq (1988) which killed over 5,000 innocent lives and left over 10,000 injured;*
- *Sarin Gas Attack in Tokyo, Japan (1995) by Aum Shinrikyo, a doomsday cult that killed 13 people and sickened more than 6,000;*
- *The chemical attack in Ghouta, Syria (2013), a sarin gas chemical attack killed over 1,400 people.*



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11. Conclusions

Considerations:

- *Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) mandates states to destroy existing weapons and prevent their proliferation;*
- *Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) aims at the complete elimination of chemical weapons stockpiles;*
- *Obligation on states not to refine, produce, stockpile, acquire or possess microbial agents, biological agents, toxins or weapons.*



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Requirements:

- *balancing security and human rights;*
- *international and national adaptation to future challenges and ways forward;*
- *international cooperation in managing security threats.*



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