

ROPME SEA KAPs



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SECOND REGIONAL MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION MEPEX 2000



Bahrain, 24th - 26th September 2000

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with Decision CM10/19 of the Tenth Meeting of ROPME Council, an International Oil Spill Combat Exhibition and Conference was conducted under the patronage of H.E. Sheikh Khalid Bin Abdulla Al-Khalifa, Minister of Housing, Municipalities and Environment in Bahrain during the period 24th - 26th September 2000. For the event MEMAC concluded a contract



with IBC (International Business Communications) Gulf Conferences to organize the Second Regional Marine Environment Protection Conference and Exhibition under the title MEPEX-2000.

The main objectives of the Meeting were to :

- Review progress in the initiatives set in place at the March 1998 Sharjah Conference and
- Broaden the scope of discussion to cover issues of Crisis Management, Safe Marine Transportation and Handling of Liquefied Gases and the Import /Export of Hazardous Chemicals in the Region.

ATTENDANCE

The Meeting was attended by over 120 Senior Member State Representatives and private sector Senior Executives and 10 Exhibitors and addressed by 26 distinguished Regional and International Lecturers and Key Note Speakers.



OPENING OF THE MEETING

The Meeting opened at 08.00 hours on Sunday 24th September 2000 with key note speeches from H.E. Sheikh Khalid Bin Abdulla Al-Khalifa, Minister of Housing, Municipalities & Environment, Bahrain, H.E. Dr. Abdul Rahman Al-Awadi, Executive Secretary of ROPME, Dr. Mahmood Y. Abdulaheem Regional Director of UNEP/ROWA and Captain A. M. Al-Janahi, Director of MEMAC.

His Excellency Sheikh Khalid Bin Abdullah Al-Khalifa, Minister of Housing, Municipalities and Environment welcomed the distinguished delegates and speakers and stressed the importance that the Government of Bahrain, under the wise leadership of H.H. The Amir, placed on protection of the marine environment. He congratulated ROPME/MEMAC on successfully organizing the

Meeting and for introducing new key topics and wished all participants an interesting and productive time during their attendance at the Conference and Exhibition.

His Excellency Dr. Abdul Rahman Al-Awadi, Executive Secretary of ROPME welcomed all distinguished delegates and speakers, and thanked H.E. Sheikh Khalid Bin Abdullah Al-Khalifa for the support extended to the Meeting by the Government of Bahrain.



He noted that it is now 22 years since the eight Member States of the Region signed and ratified the Kuwait Convention leading to the establishment of ROPME and MEMAC, and thus pledged their full support for all efforts to protect the marine environment of this sensitive eco-system.

He stated that this meeting will demonstrate the progress made by all of us in this respect since 1978 despite many critical situations, and will highlight the remaining concerns we still face, and address new topics such as Crisis Management, Liquefied Gas Transportation and Handling of Hazardous Chemicals. He ended his speech by congratulating Mr. Khalid Fakhro on his new appointment as Under-Secretary for Environmental Affairs.

Dr. Mahmood Yousef Abdulraheem, Regional Director of UNEP/ROWA, welcomed the distinguished delegates and guests and stated that it was an honour of UNEP to be a partner in this important meeting and conveyed Dr. Klaus Topfer, the Executive Director of UNEP greetings and his best wishes for a successful conference. UNEP is pleased to be able to participate in the presentation by providing experts from the DTIE Office in Paris and the Chemical Unit in Geneva to share their knowledge and experience in the fields of Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies at local level (APELL) and the safe transportation and handling of hazardous chemicals. I am sure you will find their presentations interesting and thought provoking.



He further reiterated that UNEP's environmental assessment report GEO 2000 recognizes this region's great achievement in developing national and regional environmental legal and administrative infrastructures. However, GEO 2000 also highlights the unprecedented rate of industrial development and urban growth leading to the generation of hazardous wastes far greater, per capita, than the United States. This is the challenge delegates to this meeting must be aware of. UNEP is proud of its partnership with ROPME and MEMAC, from the inception of the Kuwait Action Plan, and looks forward to continuing a close productive relationship into the future.



Captain A. M. Al-Janahi, Director, MEMAC stated that he expected the meeting to provide both a bench mark of progress on important existing regional projects such as MARPOL 73/78, Oil Spill Contingency Planning along with establishing new initiatives on safety in marine transportation and handling of liquefied gases and hazardous chemicals, and accession to the OPRC Convention by Member States.



OPENING OF THE EXHIBITION

Following the key note opening speeches, H.E. Sheikh Khalid Bin Abdullah Al-Khalifa opened the Exhibition of Oil Spill Response Equipment and following a break for refreshments the Technical Sessions commenced.



ORGANISATION OF THE CONFERENCE

All the technical sessions of the Meeting were co-chaired by Col. Suleiman Al-Busaidy of Oman and Captain Al-Janahi, Director of MEMAC, except for the

the session on leading edge oil spill technologies which was chaired by Mr. Derek Brown, Technical Adviser to MEMAC.

RECOMMENDATIONS

At the conclusion of the conference the following recommendations were tabled by the delegates for consideration and appropriate action by the ROPME Ministerial Council at their Meeting in October 2000.

1. The current MARPOL 73/78 Convention initiative towards the implementation phase to be fully supported.
2. Regional Port State Control to be urgently expedited.
3. A Workshop on Oil Spill Trajectory Modeling to be organized by MEMAC. The model should include the sensitivity mapping.
4. Handling Contingency Plans and Spillages of Hazardous Chemicals, Liquefied Natural and Petroleum Gases (LNG/LPG) to be addressed.
5. Proper media relations in a major environmental crisis to be addressed. Also consideration to conduct a workshop for the officials dealing with the media during the crisis situation.
6. A Third Conference and Exhibition of similar scope and coverage should be convened during 2002, to include a case study of major oil spill and a live demonstration of oil spill response equipment.

CLOSURE OF THE CONFERENCE

On behalf of H.E. Dr. Abdul Rahman Al-Awadi, Captain Al-Janahi concluded the meeting at 16.30 hours on Tuesday 26th September, 2000. In his closing speech he referred to ROPME/MEMAC achievements since the 1998 Sharjah Meeting and made a commitment to study the recommendations tabled by the participants at the closing session and to submit these to the ROPME Ministerial Council Meeting in October 2000 for their consideration and appropriate action.

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