

Information Note¹

Events: Training Course for English-speaking African Countries' 1540 Points of Contact

Organizers: African Union in cooperation with the 1540 Committee and its Group of Experts, with the support of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) from voluntary contributions by the European Union

Date and Venue: 26-28 March 2019, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Participants: Representatives of Governments of Botswana, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe

Representatives from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), INTERPOL, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC by video), the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa (UNREC), the World Customs Organisation (WCO by video) and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).

Representatives from the United States of America's Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) Programme.

The 1540 Group of Experts and UNODA.

Background

- Resolution 1540 (2004) and its follow-up resolutions emphasize the importance of assisting States with their implementation of the obligations contained in the resolution. In particular, the 1540 Committee, through its Programmes of Work, has promoted outreach, dialogue, assistance and cooperation with States and relevant international, regional and sub-regional organisations.
- Resolution 1673 (2006) and follow-up resolutions recognize that “the full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) by all States, including the adoption of national laws and measures to ensure the implementation of these laws is a long-term task that will require continuous efforts at national, regional and international levels”.
- To facilitate implementation of the obligations contained in resolution 1540 (2004), States are encouraged to inform the Committee of their points of contact on the implementation of resolution 1540 (1540 PoCs), both in their capitals and in their Permanent Missions in

¹ For information – not an official report. The views expressed here do not necessarily represent those of the 1540 Committee or of the organizers or participants in the event.

New York. Resolution 2325 (2016) again “encourages all States that have not yet done so to provide the 1540 Committee with a Point of Contact for Resolution 1540 (2004), and urges the Committee to continue to undertake initiatives to strengthen the capacity of such Points of Contact to assist on the implementation of the resolution, upon request of States, including through the continuation on a regional basis of the Committee’s Point of Contact Training Programme.” To date, 106 States have nominated national Points of Contact, mainly from Ministries of Foreign Affairs and other relevant national authorities. These Points of Contact act as a link between the Committee and their government officials. Some also fulfil the role of national coordinator for 1540 implementation.

- This training course was the seventh one held globally. The first took place in Qingdao, China, from 7-11 September 2015 for Points of Contact in the Asia-Pacific region, the second in Kaliningrad, Russian Federation, from 28 June to 1 July 2016 for States of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the third in Santiago, Chile, from 24-28 October 2016 for Latin American and Caribbean 1540 Points of Contact and the fourth in Xi’an, China, from 7-11 August 2017 for the Asia Pacific region. During 2018, the fifth training course took place from 14 to 17 August 2018 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (for French-speaking African countries), supported by the African Union (AU), while the sixth training course took place from 4 to 7 September 2018 in Rostov-on-Don, Russian Federation, with the support of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs. In 2018, agreement was reached with the African Union to hold another training course for Points of Contact for English-speaking African States in March 2019.

Highlights

This course was the second of two 1540 PoC training courses for the African region hosted by the AU. The training course enhanced the understanding of participants of the potential threat of the use of WMD by non-State actors, including in Africa, the importance of resolution 1540 (2004) in preventing such possibility and its implementation requirements and challenges, and of types and sources of assistance available to States. The content and design of the training programme, which aimed to enhance interaction and debate among the participants, met the objectives of the course and contributed to strengthening the 1540 Points of Contact networks in Africa. The discussions highlighted challenges to the Committee’s objective of full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) by all States.

A total of 45 African States were invited to the two training courses for PoCs in Africa. Further opportunities to engage with Lusophone and Arab-speaking African States’ PoCs need to be considered.

Additional Comments

For further information, please contact the 1540 Committee experts by e-mail at 1540experts@un.org.