

## Information Note<sup>1</sup>

Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) Workshop “Ensuring Effective Inter-Agency Interoperability and Coordinated Communication in the Event of a Chemical and/or Biological Weapons Attack (Implementation)”.

Date and venue: 9-10 April 2018, The Hague, Netherlands

Organizer: The Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) Office / United Nations Counter – Terrorism Centre (UNCCT).

Participants: The Biological Weapons Convention Implementation Support Unit (BWC ISU), IAEA, the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), OPCW, the United Nations Department of Public Information (UNDPI), the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) Group of Experts, the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs/the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNOCHA/UNEP), UNOCT, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).

### Background:

Resolution 1540 (2004) requires all States to take and enforce, inter alia, effective measures to establish domestic controls to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery including by establishing appropriate controls over related materials.

The CTITF WMD Working Group project "Interoperability of Agencies and Coordinated Communication in the Event of a Chemical and/or Biological Weapons Attack" is focused on ensuring effective inter-agency emergency preparedness and response mechanisms for dealing with terrorist attacks involving chemical and/or biological weapons or agents. It is comprised of two pillars aimed at ensuring coordination in both operational and communications aspects during such emergencies. Previous phases of the project considered existing inter-agency mechanisms with a view to enhancing them where needed, and the establishment of a network of inter-agency functional focal points as a means to sustain the mechanisms in the long term.

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

The workshop was aimed at advancing the latest phase of the Group's project. It focused on the development of practical action plans to address the recommendations stemming from the Group's table-top exercise, which was held at OPCW Headquarters in January 2017 with representatives from 15 agencies. These recommendations, when acted upon, will improve inter-agency cooperation and communications. A possible new project focused on prevention, that was raised at the CTITF WMD WG meeting in December 2017, will be also discussed.

Resolution 1540 (2004) recognizes that some States may require assistance in implementing the provisions of this resolution within their territories and invites States in a position to do so to offer assistance as appropriate in response to specific requests to the States lacking the legal and regulatory infrastructure, implementation experience and/or resources for fulfilling the above provisions. Taking advantage of the presence of a 1540 Expert in The Hague the cooperation in the provision of assistance to the Member States, was further discussed with the OPCW Technical Secretariat in the margins of the workshop.

Travel and accommodation expenses for the CTITF workshop were covered by the meeting organizers.

## **Overview**

The workshop was hosted by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), with financial support from Canada, and in coordination with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) at OPCW headquarters in The Hague. Twelve United Nations (UN) entities and international organisations participated in the workshop, which was opened by the OPCW Director-General, Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü.

The CTITF Workshop on "Ensuring Effective Inter-Agency Interoperability and Coordinated Communication in the Event of a Chemical and/or Biological Weapons Attack (Implementation)" demonstrated that Working Group on Preventing and Responding to WMD Attacks project has preventive aspects, including threat assessment and wide range of preventive measures, as well as the need to include broader relevant communities into common work with agencies that will be directly involved in the response activities.

The 1540 Committee expert engaged with experts from other international organizations on the issues relevant to the effective implementation of the resolution 1540 (2004), as well as on roles of different agencies and non-governmental organizations involved in this process. In the margins of the workshop the 1540 Committee in accordance with the 1540 Committee Programme of Work for 2018 expert discussed with the representatives of the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW further cooperation in the provision of assistance to Member States.

## **Additional Comments**

For further information, please contact the 1540 Committee experts by e-mail at [1540experts@un.org](mailto:1540experts@un.org).