

Information Note¹

- Event:** Regional workshop for Central Asian States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention on scientific and practical implementation issues.
- Organizer:** Implementation Support Unit (ISU) of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) with the financial support of the Federal Republic of Germany.
- Date and Venue:** 23-24 October 2018, Almaty, Kazakhstan
- Participants:** Germany, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan
- UN entities, international and regional organizations*
- Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the United Nations 1540 Committee Group of Experts, International Science and Technology Centre (ISTC)
- Non-Governmental organisations*
- Verification Research, Training and Information Centre (VERTIC)

Background

The BWC is an important global security instrument, and a fundamental pillar of the international community's efforts against weapons of mass destruction. The BWC plays a central role in our collective efforts to reduce the risks posed by biological weapons and bioterrorism, and to ensure that the extraordinary advances in life sciences and technology are used only for the benefit of humanity.

The resolution 1540 (2004) called upon all States to renew and fulfil their commitment to multilateral cooperation, in particular within the framework of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, as important means of pursuing and achieving their common objectives in the area of non-proliferation and of promoting international cooperation for peaceful purposes.

The workshop will serve as a platform for a comprehensive dialogue on the implementation of the Convention. The activity will review national implementation approaches and best practices among the Central Asian States Parties in an interactive manner. It will also explore opportunities for cooperation and assistance with relevant international and regional organizations.

On 21 August 2018 the Chief of the BWC Implementation Support Unit, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan and Permanent Representative of Germany to the

¹ 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.

Conference on Disarmament invited the Committee to participate in the workshop and to contribute to the discussion, including through presentations.

Overview

From 23 to 24 October 2018, the government of Kazakhstan and the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) Implementation Support Unit (ISU) with the financial support of the Federal Republic of Germany co-organized a regional workshop for Central Asian States Parties to the BWC on scientific and practical implementation issues. The activity brought together thirty participants from five BWC States Parties (Germany, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan), three regional and international organizations (United Nations 1540 Committee Group of Experts, OSCE and ISTC), and one non-governmental organization (VERTIC).

Opening remarks were provided by Mr. Yerzhan Ashikbayev, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Mr Jörn Rosenberg, Consul-General of the Federal Republic of Germany and Dr. Hermann Alex Lampalzer, Deputy Chief of the BWC ISU, who welcomed participants to the workshop and emphasised the role of the BWC as a global cornerstone in the multilateral arms control and non-proliferation, as well as encouraged the participants to seize this opportunity to work towards common understandings and effective action to enhance its implementation.

The 1540 expert made a presentation on the complementarity between resolution 1540 (2004) and the Biological Weapons Convention and provided an update on the status of implementation of the resolution globally and in Central Asian region.

The following topics were discussed during the workshop:

(a) Introduction

- i. Introduction of the Central Reference Laboratory/ Kazakh Scientific Center for Quarantine and Zoonotic Diseases;
- ii. Introductory overview about the BWC;

(b) National Implementation

- i. Implementation issues at the national level;
- ii. Sharing best practices on the domestic implementation of the BWC;
- iii. Synergies between the implementation of UNSCR 1540 and the BWC;
- iv. Confidence Building Measures under the BWC;
- v. Best Practices of CBMs;
- vi. Initiatives to enhance transparency and build confidence; national legislation);

vii. National legislation;

(d) Cooperation and Assistance

i. Opportunities for cooperation and assistance;

ii. Opportunities for bilateral discussions between Central Asian experts and representatives of regional/international organizations;

The workshop demonstrated strong commitment of participating States to implementing provisions of the Convention as one of the fundamental pillars of the multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation regime, as well as their readiness to continue efforts to further enhance the domestic implementation of the Convention, including by further amending or revising existing national legislation.

Additional Comments

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