

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

- Event:** Sixteenth Regional Meeting of National Authorities of States Parties in Africa
- Organizer:** Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
- Date and Venue:** 19-21 June 2018 – Marrakesh, Morocco
- Participants:** *39 OPCW Member States:* Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Congo, Congo-Brazzaville, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe  
*International and regional organisations:* UN 1540 Committee, the World Customs Organization, the East African Community, the Economic Community of Central African States, and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development

### Background

On 15 March 2018, Hamza Khelif, Director of International Cooperation and Assistance Division, OPCW, sent a letter to the Chair of the 1540 Committee inviting a representative of the Group of Experts assisting the Committee to take part in the Sixteenth Regional Meeting of National Authorities of States Parties in Africa.

The objectives for the Meeting were to: (a) discuss regional trends in the trade of chemicals and the role of customs in Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) implementation; (b) identify customs needs and the ways to address them; (c) raise the awareness of customs administrations and National Authorities on regional and global projects and operations that target illicit trade in dual-use chemicals; (d) discuss possible support from international and regional organisations as well as National Authorities to customs administrations for national implementation of the Convention; (e) discuss the elements of the national implementation framework for the Convention; and (f) hold bilateral meetings with the representatives of National Authorities on issues pertaining to national implementation.

The expected results of the Meeting included: (a) improved understanding of the role of customs in Convention implementation by both customs administrations and National Authorities; (b) identification of customs needs and the opportunities to address them, including through support provided by international and regional organisations; (c) strengthened cooperation between

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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.

National Authorities and customs administrations; and (d) the collection of feedback on the design of a national implementation framework for the Convention and review of the national implementation status of the States Parties.

## **Highlights**

The OPCW's 16<sup>th</sup> regional meeting for National Authorities in Africa with its novel structure – two days for customs and National Authority officials together, with a third for National Authorities only, in addition to three breakout sessions giving participants the time and space to digest the volume of information and ideas generated by the meeting – was a success.

Over the course of three days, the participants heard presentations from international and regional organisations, including of course the OPCW; National Authorities; and customs officials. The 1540 expert presented on key obligations of resolution 1540 (2004), then focused on operative paragraphs 3(c) and 3(d) in order to draw attention to border control and law enforcement, the prevention of illicit trafficking, and export and transshipment controls to an audience consisting of customs officials as well as National Authorities. The 1540 Expert then described operative paragraphs 8, 12 and 14 in resolution 2325 (2016) and the renewed importance the Security Council has placed on national export and transshipment controls, including national control lists. After providing some statistics on how operative paragraphs 3(c) and 3(d) are being implemented by countries in different regions, the 1540 Expert described the types of assistance that are available to ameliorate the situation in Africa, where implementation of border and strategic trade control is less robust than in other regions.

The breakout sessions were particularly fruitful. During the first such session, the groups were tasked to identify customs authorities' needs for effective cross-border control of toxic chemicals and the development of solutions to address these needs. During the second breakout session, the participants discussed mechanisms and opportunities for cooperation between National Authorities and customs. During the third breakout session, the participants reviewed and commented on the elements and objectives of the OPCW's new concept of "national implementation framework", and were invited to add to the proposed list of implementation measures while identifying the pros and cons of having a national implementation roadmap.

## **Additional Comments**

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