

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

**Event:** The Organization for Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Conference on Countering Chemical Terrorism.

**Organizer:** OPCW

**Date and Venue:** 7-8 June, The Hague, Netherlands

### Background

Resolution 2325 (2016) in operative paragraph 23 “encourages relevant international, regional and subregional organizations to enhance cooperation and information-sharing with the 1540 Committee, on the issues related to the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004)”.

In October 2017, the OPCW Executive Council adopted a decision instructing the Technical Secretariat to assist States Parties in addressing the threats posed by non-state actors, including terrorists, who seek to use chemical weapons. As these threats are a challenge for the entire international community, the Technical Secretariat has decided to convene a Conference on Countering Chemical Terrorism. The Conference will bring together government officials, international and regional organizations engaged in countering chemical or WMD terrorism, as well as important non-governmental organizations and actors from civil society, including academics and industry representatives.

The primary objectives of the conference were: to increase awareness and understanding of the threat of chemical terrorism; to highlight the current and future role of the CWC and OPCW in combatting chemical terrorism; to promote national and regional measures to counter chemical terrorism, and; to strengthen cooperation in countering chemical terrorism among international organizations and other key stakeholders.

On 29 March 2017, Director General of the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW, Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü sent a letter to the Chair of the 1540 Committee inviting him to nominate a member of the 1540 Committee’s Group of Experts to attend the conference and to participate in conference’s deliberations.

### Overview

On 7 and 8 June 2018, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) hosted the first Conference on Countering Chemical Terrorism at its Headquarters in The Hague, the Netherlands. The

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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 organizers or participants in the event.

conference was attended by more than 250 participants representing 67 States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention, relevant international organisations, non-governmental organisations, and academia. The conference's central objectives were to explore the threat of chemical terrorism, to discuss and share strategies for preventing and responding to acts of chemical terrorism, and to consider how to ensure the legal accountability of non-State actors.

The conference provided an excellent opportunity to share understandings about how States, international organisations, and other stakeholders can counter the threat of chemical terrorism, to identify measures to prevent deliberate releases of toxic chemicals and to mitigate the impact if such events occur.

On the margins of the conference synergies and possible cooperation in the provision of assistance requested by Member States and plans for outreach activities in 2018 were further discussed with representatives of the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW.

### **Additional Comments**

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