

Information Note¹

- Event:** Workshop on Enhancing Implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention and Improving Biosafety and Biosecurity Frameworks in the Dominican Republic
- Organiser(s):** Government of Dominican Republic, the Implementation Support Unit of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC)
- Date and Venue:** 22 and 23 March 2022, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
- Participants:** National government representatives: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Energy and Mines, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Environment, National Energy Commission, General Directorate of Customs, and Dominican Republic Permanent Missions at Geneva, New York, and Vienna, and the Embassy in Mexico
International and regional organizations: 1540 Committee, Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism / Organization of American States (CICTE/OAS), the UN Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC) and the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CAPRHA – virtually)

Background

On 22 February 2022, the Chief of the BWC Implementation Support Unit (BWC-ISU) sent a letter to the Chair of the 1540 Committee inviting one technical expert to participate in the Workshop on Enhancing Implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention and Improving Biosafety and Biosecurity Frameworks in the Dominican Republic (DR). This activity was framed under a project launched on 16 September 2021 which was funded by the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.

The objectives of the meeting were to enhance the domestic implementation of the BWC, as well as identifying concrete steps to strengthen existing legislative frameworks.

This meeting was of direct relevance to the 1540 Committee with regard to the following operative paragraphs of resolution 2325 (2016):

1. Reiterates its decisions in and the requirements of resolution 1540 (2004), and re-emphasizes the importance for all States to implement fully and effectively that resolution;
22. Encourages the Committee to develop, in collaboration with international, regional and subregional organizations, assistance projects to support States in implementing resolution 1540 (2004) in order to facilitate the prompt and direct response to assistance requests;

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.

29. Requests the 1540 Committee to continue to organize and participate in outreach events on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) at the international, regional, subregional, and as appropriate, national level, including, as appropriate, inviting parliamentarians, as well as representatives of civil society, including industry and academia and promote the refinement of these outreach efforts to focus on specific thematic and regional issues related to implementation.

Objectives of Participation of the 1540 Expert

- Make a presentation on the obligations and key elements of the resolution 1540 (2004), its complementarities with the BWC and the Committee's assistance mechanism.
- Contribute to discussions during the workshop.

Highlights and Discussions

Mr Hermann Lampalzer, Deputy Chief of the BWC-ISU, opened the workshop delivering a comprehensive picture of the BWC. He was followed by His Excellency Virgilio Alcántara from the Permanent Mission in Geneva, who highlighted the relevance of the BWC during pandemic times and the DR's obligations under the BWC. Finally, the last opening remarks were delivered by His Excellency Ruben Silié, Viceminister of Multilateral Affairs, who referred to the DR's commitment to fully implement resolution 1540 (2004) as well as the BWC and thanked the UN, the UK, the DR Permanent Mission in Geneva and the local involved agencies.

The workshop contributed to raise awareness among participants about different aspects related to the BWC as well as the obligations expressed in resolution 1540 (2004). The workshop also provided the opportunity for the participants to learn about the submission of the Confidence Building Measures (CBMs), discuss the current status of implementation of the BWC and the challenges they face to implement it. Available assistance programmes and future CBMs submissions to the BWC-ISU by the Dominica Republic were also discussed.

Additional Comments

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