

Information Note¹

Event: Meeting on the implementation of UNSCR 1540 (2004) in Ecuador and drafting a voluntary National Implementation Action Plan (vNAP)

Organizer: Inter-American Committee against Terrorism of the Organization of American States (CICTE/OAS) with the collaboration of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) and the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

Date and Venue: 14 May 2024 (virtual)
12-13 June 2024 (in-presence in Quito, Ecuador)
5 September 2024 (virtual)

Participants: Representatives from institutions of Ecuador, including • Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility • Ministry of National Defense • Ministry of Energy and Mines • Ministry of Production, Foreign Trade, Investment and Fishing • Ministry of the Interior • Ministry of Public Health • Ministry of Economy and Finance • Ministry of Agriculture • Ministry of Education • National Customs Service of Ecuador • Financial and Economic Analysis Unit (UAFE) • Strategic Intelligence Center • Phytosanitary and Zoosanitary Regulation and Control Agency (AGROCALIDAD) • National Institute of Public Health Research (INSPI) • Other national stakeholders.

Representatives of relevant regional and international organizations, including: • Security Council Committee established pursuant to the resolution (1540 Committee) • Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (CICTE) of the Organization of the American States (OAS) • International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) • Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) • United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) • United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC) • United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Terrorism Branch • Federal Office for Economic Affairs and Export Control (BAFA) • Implementation Support Unit of Biological Weapons Convention (ISU BWC) • World Custom Organization (WCO)

1540 Committee's Expert

¹ For information – not an official report. The views expressed here by the member of the Expert Group do not necessarily represent those of the 1540 Committee or of the organizers or participants in the event.

Background

In a letter dated 24 April 2024, Ms. Alison August Treppel, Executive Secretary Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (CICTE) of the Organization of American States (OAS) invited the Chair of the 1540 Committee, any other Member of the Committee and its Group of Experts to a meeting regarding the assistance request by Ecuador for drafting its Voluntary National Implementation Action Plan under the framework of the United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

This invitation launched a series of three back-to-back events, including an introductory one conducted virtually on May 14, 2024 aiming to strengthen the knowledge of the Ecuadorian key stakeholders regarding the implementation of a National Action Plan (NAP). This was followed by a workshop on strengthening the implementation of the UNSCR 1540 (2004) in Ecuador on June 12 and 13, 2024 where the Chair of the Committee participated in. Finally, a third meeting conducted virtually on 5 September 2024 had the objective to further support to draft Ecuador's NAP by discussing the conclusions from the workshop held in Quito.

This Workshop was of relevance to resolution 1540 (2004) as follows:

- Resolution 1540 (2004) recognizes that most States have undertaken binding legal obligations under treaties to which they are parties, or have made other commitments aimed at preventing the proliferation of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons, and have taken effective measures to account for, secure and physically protect sensitive materials.
- Operative paragraph 1 of resolution 1540 (2004) requires States to refrain from providing any form of support to non-State actors that attempt to develop, acquire, manufacture, possess, transport, transfer or use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery. Under operative paragraph 2, States are obliged to adopt and enforce appropriate and effective laws prohibiting such activities by non-State actors on their territories. Operative paragraph 3 requires States to take and enforce 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.
- 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.
- Operative paragraph 12 of resolution 2663 (2022) reiterates the Security Council's decision that the 1540 Committee shall continue to intensify its efforts to promote the full implementation by all States of resolution 1540 (2004) ... noting the need for more attention on: enforcement measures; measures relating to biological, chemical and nuclear weapons; accounting for and securing related materials; and national export and transshipment controls.
- Operative paragraph 21 of resolution 2663 (2022) urges the 1540 Committee, using its full expertise, to promote the facilitation of technical assistance through, as appropriate, organizing, co-organizing, participating in or supporting international and regional assistance

conferences, which bring together Member States that request assistance with those offering assistance, and further encourages Member States, including those in the region with relevant expertise, relevant international, regional and subregional organizations, in a position to do so, to support such efforts.

- Furthermore, operative paragraph 25 of resolution 2663 (2022) 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.

Highlights

Three back-to-back events to support Ecuador in the preparation of a voluntary National Implementation Action Plan allowed first an introductory virtual meeting on 14 May 2024 to familiarize national key stakeholders with resolution 1540 (2004) before the core workshop conducted in-presence in Quito on 13-14 June 2024. This went into details of resolution 1540 (2004) requirements, its relationship with other relevant international instruments together with other International and Regional Organizations, the status of Ecuador national implementation and tools of the Committee in support of implementation, namely the vNAP and assistance mechanism. This was attended by approximately 40 mid to senior level representatives of the relevant Ecuadorian ministries and agencies, considering collectively national gaps and priorities as well as coordinating and scheduling activities. Finally, a virtual meeting on 5 September with main Ecuadorian representatives presented main conclusions and priority activities, including the creation of a national inter-institutional comity on resolution 1540 (2004) implementation, a technical and legislative diagnostic, capacity-building, identification of needs in terms of international assistance and sensitization of relevant national stakeholders, including private sector, academia and civil society.

The workshop in Quito was opened by Ms. Gina Ochoa, Permanent Representative of OAS in Ecuador. She welcomed the event aiming to establish a voluntary National Action Plan by Ecuador. She promoted the role of CICTE as a platform supporting efforts of States of the region to implement resolution 1540 (2004). In that vein, she noted the engagement of States and progress already achieved, mentioning the importance of biosecurity among others. She also encouraged a continuous dialogue, including through States sharing their national best practices.

Ms. Lena Savelli, United Nations Resident Coordinator in Ecuador, expressed her gratitude for the conduction of this national event marked by a strong representation of national authorities. She emphasized the importance to rely on materials and technologies for peaceful purposes while they can be diverted to the development of weapons of mass destruction by organized criminality and terrorism. She then stressed the role of decision makers and encouraged the work with civil society, including in a challenged regional context, for a sustainable development.

Ambassador José Javier De La Gasca, 1540 Committee's Chair, commended the CICTE/OAS for organizing this event, in collaboration with UNODA. He highlighted the importance resolution 1540 (2004) in international efforts aimed at preventing proliferation of weapons of mass

destruction and their means of delivery to non-state actors. He recalled that none of the obligations under this resolution shall be interpreted so as to conflict with or alter the rights and obligations of State Parties to other relevant international instruments. He raised that Ecuador has demonstrated a long-term engagement with the 1540 Committee through diverse national and regional 1540-related events. He considered positively the presence of numbers national stakeholders in this new event aiming to develop a vNAP. He also acknowledged and warmly welcome the participation by partners from international and regional organizations that can offer various forms of assistance and support in the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

Ms. Gabriela Sommerfield, Ecuadorian foreign minister, welcomed the national event on resolution 1540 (2004), pointing out that nuclear, biological and chemical materials are commonly used in industry. She also stressed resolution 1540 (2004)'s relevance at regional scale, what justify a cooperation with neighboring States. This workshop then represents an opportunity to raise knowledge on resolution 1540 (2004) requirements and will facilitate the establishment of a substantial vNAP.

Additional Comments

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