

Information Note¹

- Event: Regional Training Workshop on Countering Terrorism with a Specific Focus on Preventing Bioterrorism Attacks Involving Biological Agents and Toxins
- Organizer: Organized by the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Centre in Ashgabat and United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT) of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), hosted by Turkmenistan
- Date and Venue: 5-6 June 2023, virtually
- Participants: Representatives from authorities of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), World Health Organization (WHO), World Customs Organization (WCO), United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

Background

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.
- 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.

- 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 level ... and promote the refinement of these outreach efforts to focus on specific thematic and regional issues related to implementation.

OSCE's invitation letter noted that the Workshop would aim to raise awareness of Central Asia States' law enforcement, border security officials and healthcare professionals of current biological threats related to global terrorism, natural diseases outbreaks and technological vulnerabilities.

Highlights

This workshop effectively covered the range of topics relating to the rather complex subject to preventing bioterrorism attacks involving biological agents and toxins. The different relevant requirements under Security Council resolutions, other international laws, as well as national legislation to State actors and to non-State actors were highlighted. The risks in the region were also analysed. The participants expressed appreciation for assistance to their national efforts to develop and enforce effective legislation to combat bioterrorism. The different States represented at the meeting were at different stages in these respects and participants clearly appreciated learning from others' experiences and practices. Participants were given a presentation of the 1540 Committee Expert on the obligations under UN Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) with specific reference to biological weapons and measures to account for, secure and physically protect related materials, the status of implementation based on the latest matrix data and the 1540 Committee's assistance mechanism.

The participants expressed their readiness to explore further opportunities for cooperation in the fight against the threats of biological terrorism discussed during the event.

Additional Comments

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