

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

- Event:** Caribbean Seminar on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004): Focus List, Licensing Protocols and Risk Assessment
- Organizer:** Organised by United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC)
- Date and Venue:** 6-7 November 2019, Belize City, Belize

### Background

- On 27 September 2019, Ms Izumi Nakamitsu, Under-Secretary General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, sent a letter to the Chair of the 1540 Committee inviting him to designate a member of the Group of Experts to participate in a Caribbean Seminar on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004): Focus List, Licensing Protocols and Risk Assessment.
- The objectives of the Seminar were to foster discussion on the relevance of using WMD Focus Lists and Licensing Protocols as practical tools to develop effective strategic trade controls in the Caribbean, and strengthen technical capacities of customs officers from the Caribbean States on risk assessment to advance in the full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

### Overview

#### Day 1:

##### *Welcoming remarks*

The first day started with welcoming remarks from the Commissioner of the Belize Police, on behalf of Belize as the host country. He focused his remarks on the importance of licensing regimes for controlling the export, transshipment, transit and re-export of strategic goods, noting that Belize is now working on a national control list as part of their fulfilment of obligations under resolution 1540 (2004).

The Commissioner's remarks were followed by a welcoming statement from the 1540 Expert. The Expert underlined that resolution 1540 (2004) imposes binding obligations on all States to adopt legislation to prohibit any non-State actor to manufacture, acquire, possess, develop, transport, transfer or use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery, in particular

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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.

for terrorist purposes. It also obliges all States to take and enforce effective measures to establish domestic controls to prevent the proliferation of these weapons and their means of delivery. The Expert concluded his remarks by drawing the participants' attention to the recent 1540 point of contact training in Barbados, where the participants in the course confirmed the usefulness of a regional approach to training and concluded that the availability of a Guide to Control Lists, Focus Lists and a Licensing Guide for States in the region could serve as a valuable source of reference for those States which have yet to develop a national control list.

The participants next heard from an official from UNLIREC, who stressed that customs officials are on the front line for controlling strategic trade. She confirmed that the objectives of the seminar were to discuss licensing protocols, focus lists and licensing guides, as well as risk assessments. She added that the seminar would significantly contribute to the ongoing regional dialogue on strategic trade.

#### *Session 1 – Implementing UNSC Resolution 1540 (2004) to counter regional threats and technical assistance programmes for the Caribbean*

A UNLIREC expert gave a presentation introducing resolution 1540 (2004) and successor resolutions. He also described UNLIREC's assistance projects for Latin America and the Caribbean, giving details about their legal assistance work with States, technical support and facilitation of regional dialogue on implementation of the resolution. A representative from the Stimson Center gave a presentation on that institution's Assistance Support Initiative (ASI), which was inspired by recommendations from the report of the 2016 Comprehensive Review on assistance.

#### *Session 2 – National progress: National Action Plans*

The 1540 Expert gave the first presentation in this session and described the indicative elements and characteristics of voluntary National Implementation Action Plans (NAPs); how the Committee can help States to draft NAPs and their usefulness. This was followed by presentation from a UNLIREC speaker who described their work on NAPs in the region. The 1540 point of contact for Belize then presented on how Belize is implementing their 2017 NAP.

#### *Session 3 – Countering WMD proliferation: strategic trade controls, the role of customs*

The 1540 Expert gave the first presentation during this session and focused his remarks on operative paragraphs (OP) 3(c) and (d) of resolution 1540 (2004). The next presentation was given by a speaker from the WCO on their efforts to train Member State officials on strategic trade control. A speaker from EXBS described that programme's work in the region to assist governments in bringing their export control systems up to international standards. The programme focuses on three core areas: strategic trade management, customs enforcement and border security operations.

## Day 2:

### *Session 4: UNLIREC's Licensing Guide*

The UNLIREC speaker described the objective of the Guide as providing States with guidance on how to implement a national licensing framework to regulate the legitimate flow of goods and technology.

### *Session 5: UNLIREC's Guide to Control Lists and Focus List*

During this session, the UNLIREC speaker described the Guide to Control Lists they had developed specifically for the Caribbean region, and the accompanying Focus List.

### *Session 6 – Strategic Trade Atlas*

In this session, the speaker from WCO explained that the Strategic Trade Atlas (STA) can be used to analyse data and understand strategic trade patterns. The STA, developed by the EU's Joint Research Centre and Argonne National Laboratory in the US, is based on data from UN COMTRADE and BACI and is a collection of maps which identify potential trade risks.

### *Session 7 – Practical exercise: Development of risk management indicators for strategic goods*

This session was led by the WCO official. He went through a series of scenarios involving different countries and commodities and asked participants to answer related questions by using the STA as a resource.

### *Session 8 – Open session on identifying Caribbean priorities and summary and conclusions of the Seminar*

Participants were pleased that the Seminar highlighted the role customs officers play in countering WMD proliferation. They concurred that the greatest benefit of the Seminar was being exposed to the existing 1540 tools to assist in their daily functions, becoming more aware of the real threat of dual-use goods entering/exiting their countries, and the strengthened relationship with customs officials from other Caribbean States. Participants also agreed on the importance of involving both customs officers and national authorities in further UNSCR 1540 activities, and they affirmed the importance of carrying out training for customs officers and comptrollers at the national level.

## **Additional Comments**

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