

Information Note¹

Event:	Workshop on the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and their Contribution to the Non-proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction
Organized by:	Government of Croatia and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)
Date and Venue:	4-5 April 2009; Cavtat, Dubrovnik, Croatia
Key Participants:	<i>States:</i> Albania, Algeria, Australia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Croatia, Cuba, Iran, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Republic of Moldova, Poland, Qatar, Russian Federation, Serbia, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United States <i>International organizations and other entities:</i> Biological Weapons Convention-Implementation Support Unit (BWC-ISU), UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA); OPCW; 1540 Committee Member; 1540 Committee expert <i>Civil society:</i> European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC), Verification Research, Training, and Information Centre (VERTIC).

1. Objectives

- Promote awareness of resolution 1540 (2004) and its complementary requirements to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and Biological Weapons Convention (BWC);
- Conduct dialogues with States on their implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), including exchange of experiences and lessons learned.

2. Background

The workshop took place just before the “Fifth World Congress on Chemical, Biological and Radiological Terrorism”, 5-10 April 2009, which was the 16th Meeting of the Chemical and Biological Medical Treatment Symposium (CBMTS-Industry VI) series (www.asanltr.com/cbmts/default.htm). The CBMTS aims to bring together professionals in science and medicine to address the challenges of medical treatment for military and civilian casualties arising from toxic industrial chemicals/materials, and chemical and pharmaceutical accidents.

The context in which the OPCW sponsored the workshop was its concerns, as noted in The Second Review Conference of the States Parties to the CWC, “that, along with the continued threat of the possible use of chemical weapons by States under any circumstances, the international community also faces the increased danger of the use of chemical weapons by terrorists or other non-state actors.”

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.

3. Highlights

The workshop provided a forum for discussion of practical issues relating to contributions that relevant industries and academia could make to the full implementation of the CWC, the BWC, and to the achievement of the WMD non-proliferation objectives. At the workshop, chemical and biological specialists were able to interact with policymakers on non-proliferation issues. Participating States shared their national developments, experiences, and lessons learned in implementation of the CWC and BWC in particular, in the context of chemical and biological safety and security.

The 1540 Committee Member and expert presented the requirements of resolution 1540 (2004) and their complementary to CWC and BWC measures. They outlined provisions of the resolution related to effective measures and controls over related materials to prevent their proliferation: controls of accounting/securing and physical protection to prevent sensitive materials from being illicitly trafficked across borders, and strengthening of border and export controls to prevent and detect illegal cross-border movements of such items. It was stressed that the control measures were not intended to hamper international trade and cooperation, but rather can contribute to increased efficiency of customs control and compliance.

4. Bilateral consultations

The 1540 Committee expert conducted dialogues with individual States, including providing the country with its 1540 matrix and discussing its content, regarding their implementation of resolution 1540.

5. Additional comments

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