

Information Note¹

Event: **Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) Meeting of Experts**

Organizer: BWC Implementation Support Unit (ISU)

Date and Venue: 18-22 August 2008; Geneva, Switzerland

Key Participants: *States:* 96 States

International organizations: Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), World Health Organization (WHO), World Organization for Animal Health, UN Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), UN Office for Disarmament Affairs, (UNODA), 1540 Committee expert
(An official participants list, including observer States and other organizations and entities, is on the [UNOG](#) website)

1. **Objectives**

- Promote awareness of resolution 1540 (2004) and its full implementation;
- Dialogue with States on status of their implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) and explore opportunities for assistance requests and offers, as appropriate.

2. **Background**

The BWC Meeting of Experts is part of a four-year program of inter-sessional meetings mandated by the 2006 Sixth BWC Review Conference, aimed at strengthening the implementation of the Convention and improving its effectiveness as a practical barrier against the development or use of biological weapons.

The 2006 BWC Review Conference established the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) to assist States' implementation of the BWC. The ISU has a clearinghouse function to facilitate assistance for States' implementation of the Convention; and its website offers tools for implementation. The ISU provides administrative support to inter-sessional meetings agreed by the Review Conference as well as for workshops on national implementation, universalization of the Convention, and support and assistance for reports on Confidence-Building Measures submitted to the Geneva office.

3. **Highlights**

The meeting focused on two main themes: (1) biosafety and biosecurity; and (2) oversight, education, awareness, and codes of conduct. Participants shared best practices and new methods for biosafety and biosecurity. The 1540 Committee expert made a presentation on requirements of resolution 1540 (2004) and emphasized the mutually enforcing implementation efforts between it and the BWC. For example, physical protection measures for dangerous pathogens and toxins in a laboratory or measures to secure their handling and transportation with regard to implementation of the BWC or other regulations, also can contribute to implementation of resolution 1540. The BWC confidence-building measures to report on

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legislative developments to implement the BWC can also contribute to (additional) reporting for resolution 1540.

4. **Bilateral consultations**

The 1540 Committee expert conducted dialogues with participating States on their implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), including opportunities for submitting additional information, such as voluntary national action plans and possible areas of technical assistance.

5. **Additional comments**

For official documents of the Meeting, please visit the [UNOG](#) website.

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