

Information Note¹

- Event:** Workshop to assist in the development of legislation to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1540, the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) and the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).
- Organizer:** Government of Jamaica in collaboration with Verification Research, Training and Information Centre (VERTIC)
- Date and venue:** 6-8 April 2016, Kingston, Jamaica
- Participants:** Jamaica, Caribbean Community (CARICOM). 1540 Committee Group of Experts
VERTIC, University of Georgia (USA)

1. Background

Resolution 1977 (2011) encourages the 1540 Committee, with the support of necessary relevant expertise, to actively engage in dialogue with States on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), including through visits to States at their invitation. Operative paragraph 7 of resolution 1540 (2004) recognises that some States may require assistance in implementing the provisions of the resolution.

On 18 March 2016 the Government of Jamaica invited members of the 1540 Group of Experts to participate in a workshop to assist in the development of legislation to implement the BWC and CWC, related strategic trade controls and resolution 1540 (2004). The workshop was organized by the Legal Affairs Unit in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Jamaica in collaboration with VERTIC.

This was the second workshop of its kind in which the 1540 Group of Experts participated.

2. Overview

The workshop in Kingston was organised by Jamaica's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade and VERTIC with funds from the Government of Canada, as part of the CARICOM-UNSCR 1540 Implementation Programme. It was designed for representatives of the Jamaican Government in charge of drafting legislation to implement the BWC and CWC, related strategic trade controls and resolution 1540 (2004). The workshop consisted of a meeting with mainly legal advisors from different ministries.

The workshop aimed to inform the participants of the obligations in resolution 1540 (2004), the BWC, CWC, and to assist them in meeting their international obligations and to help close existing gaps in their national legislation. It focused mainly on discussing and analysing the new draft bills the Jamaican Government developed since the last meeting. Since the last meeting Jamaica finished its process of developing a draft chemical weapons bill. This bill was developed

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in consultation with the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). It remains to be finalised.

In accordance with the request by the Government of Jamaica, the main focus of the discussion was on the main findings and recommendations of the VERTIC evaluation of Jamaica's 1540 related legislation, and specifically their draft bills on the CWC, the BWC and their export control legislation.

The programme of the Jamaica workshop included informal discussions with the Jamaican Government representatives with the 1540 Experts and the VERTIC team.

3. Highlights

Day 1 of the workshop focused on the BWC, Day 2 on the implementation of the CWC and Day 3 on Export and Border Controls. On each day the experts focused on giving the participants throughout overview of the obligations that have to be implemented at national level in each field. They also commented on the findings of the legal analysis conducted by VERTIC in terms of what was implemented already and what gaps were identified.

Participants discussed measures to strengthen internal and strategic trade controls over biological agents, toxins, scheduled chemicals and related dual use materials.

The 1540 Experts made presentations on BWC and CWC implementation, the 1540 matrix of Jamaica and its overall findings and gaps and on measures required in the field of Export and Border Controls. The obligations arising of paragraph 3 c) and d) were highlighted and examples of how to draft comprehensive export control legislation that would meet the needs of resolution 1540 (2004) were given.

In the discussions on the draft bill, the government representatives indicated that they will make relevant changes to the bill, drawing on the recommendations of VERTIC delivered before the workshop and those of the 1540 Experts throughout the workshop.

4. Additional Comments

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