Information Note[1]

Event: 11th Annual Conference of Customs Heads, Oceania Customs Organisation (OCO)

Organizers: Oceania Customs Organisation (OCO)

Date and Venue: 4-8 May 2009; Port Vila, Vanuatu

Participants: *OCO State Members:* Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu; (OCO non-State members also participated).
Observers: Canada, Japan, Timor-Leste.
International organizations and entities: Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), Pacific Plant Protection Organisation, Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police, Pacific Immigration Directors' Conference (PIDC), Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency, Pacific Anti-Money Laundering Project (PALP), UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), World Customs Organization (WCO), 1540 Committee member and expert.

1. Objectives

- Raise awareness of resolution 1540 (2004) among the Customs Heads of participating States;
- Dialogue with the participating delegations on the requirements of resolution 1540 (2004) that might complement their national programs;
- Explore how the OCO can develop and deliver assistance projects to facilitate the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

2. Background

The OCO is one of the Pacific Islands' regional specialised law enforcement and legal agencies that reports annually to the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) meetings of the Forum Regional Security Committee (FRSC). Participation by the 1540 Committee in this conference was intended to follow-on directly from the New Zealand-GICNT workshop on 28 April and UNODA-organised workshop on resolution 1540 focusing on border and export controls from 29 April to 1 May. The three events were held consecutively at the same venue to facilitate travel logistics as well as reinforce complementarity of activities to support international instruments and requirements addressed by the meetings.

3. Highlights

Under the conference theme "Customs in the 21st Century", discussions focused on money laundering, its arrangement with the WCO including to provide assistance to OCO members under the WCO's Colombus assistance programme, intellectual property rights, border management, and other trade and law enforcement issues.

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[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.

The 1540 Committee Member and expert presented the requirements of resolution 1540 (2004) as well as the outcomes of the UNODA-organised workshop on resolution 1540 (2004) which took place beforehand, including assistance facilitation activities. Conference participants discussed ways in which OCO initiatives could complement resolution 1540 (2004), such as the new model customs legislation. The model customs legislation had been drafted by the OCO in conjunction with the PIFS to enable those OCO members with less capacity to be able to adopt legislation in accordance with their national circumstances to facilitate customs modernisation. In the process of States' adoption of this legislation, they could also incorporate relevant requirements of resolution 1540 (2004).

Among the decisions of the annual conference, participants reaffirmed their commitment to resolution 1540 (2004) and recognized the relevance of regional cooperation to:
- appoint focal points at the national level to deal with issues related to resolution 1540 (2004);
- seek to adopt legislation within national legal frameworks that address the requirements of resolution 1540 (2004).

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 (2004).

5. **Additional comments**

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