

Information Note¹

- Event:** **Workshop on the Implementation of UNSCR 1540 (2004) for Pacific Island States**
- Organizers:** The United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) in cooperation with the Government of Vanuatu as host country; funded by the European Union, the Governments of New Zealand and Norway.
- Date and Venue:** 29 April-1 May 2009; Port-Vila, Vanuatu
- Participants:** *Participating States:* Cook Islands, Fiji, Republic of Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu, as well as Australia, France, New Zealand, United States
- Other:* European Union
- International organizations and entities:* Biological Weapons Convention-Implementation Support Unit (BWC-ISU), International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), International Maritime Organization (IMO), Oceania Customs Organization (OCO), Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), UN Office for Disarmament Affairs and its Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament for Asia and the Pacific (RCPD), 1540 Committee members and experts
- Others:* Research Institute of Science and Technology for Society; Japan Science and Technology Agency; Verification Research, Training and Information Centre (VERTIC); and University of Wollongong.

1. Objectives

- Promote awareness of the importance of resolution 1540 (2004) and its full implementation;
- Facilitate sharing of experience on practical issues relating to the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), particularly border and export controls;
- Explore regional cooperation that can be used to improve the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004);
- Encourage cooperation arrangements through assistance programmes and the 1540 assistance template;
- Conduct bilateral consultations with the participating States to discuss specific assistance requests and encourage the submission of additional information, such as a summary action plan for implementing resolution 1540 (2004).

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.

2. Background

The workshop held in Vanuatu was the third in a series of UNODA-organized regional workshops to promote capacity-building on national and regional levels to advance full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). The workshop focused primarily on the main elements of border and export controls and was specifically tailored for border, customs and regulatory officials from the participating Pacific Island States. It aimed at encouraging experience-sharing in related areas and at the identification of specific capacity-building measures that are responsive to regional and specific national requirements. The workshop served as a platform for raising awareness of available offers or programmes of technical assistance. The workshop's programme included presentations on: national mechanisms to monitor export, re-export, transit and trans-shipments; international and regional efforts and approaches of international and regional organizations to support the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004); and available assistance programmes to facilitate the implementation of the resolution. Discussions took place on trade facilitation and security, risk assessment and management, examination techniques and technical detection capabilities and cooperation with industry and the academic community.

The 1540 workshop was held in conjunction with two other regional events related to border and export controls:

- workshop on radiological material security and safety in the Pacific sponsored by New Zealand under the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT) (28 April 2009)
- 11th Oceania Customs Organization (OCO) Annual Conference of Customs Heads (4-8 May 2009).

3. Highlights

The 1540 Committee representatives outlined the objectives of resolution 1540 (2004) and the requirements for its implementation to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery to and by non-State actors. Participating States expressed strong support for resolution 1540 (2004) and its relevance to current security concerns. Geographical and resource constraints faced by many Pacific Island States pose challenges to the resolution's full implementation. Discussions during the workshop highlighted:

- the full relevance of the regional approach and the necessity to increase cooperation between Pacific Island States and regional organizations such as the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and the OCO. Further development of such cooperation, including through information sharing, can enable better implementation of resolution 1540 (2004);
- the usefulness of designating 1540 coordinators at the national level, who would be identified as points of contact for 1540 related issues and focal points for related inter-agency coordination;
- the necessity to continue adaptation of national legal frameworks, for example by referring to model legislation by OCO-PIFS on customs and OCO-SPC on biological security, so that basic requirements of resolution 1540 (2004) are fulfilled;
- as capacity-building is a pressing issue in the region, the encouragement of States that need assistance to make full use of assistance mechanisms established through resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1810 (2008).

4. Bilateral consultations

Bilateral consultations were held between each of the participating Pacific Island States and 1540 Committee Member and experts to discuss next steps in the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) and explore possible assistance needs, including modalities for preparing and submitting an assistance request template. Assistance requirements clustered around areas related to the adaptation of the legal framework; commodity identification of dual-use materials and goods; and exchange of information.

5. Additional comments

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