

Information Note¹

Event: Workshop on Global and Regional Efforts to Combat WMD Terrorism

Organizers: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy and Institute of International Affairs (Italy)

Date and Venue: 24 October 2008; Rome, Italy

Participants: *States:* Australia, Germany, Italy and Japan

Other: European Union

International organizations: International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), NATO, Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), 1540 Committee expert

Civil society: Center on Global Counterterrorism Cooperation, the Century Foundation, Diplomatic Academy (Moscow), EU Institute for Security Studies, Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique, International Law Association, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, Institut Fur Politikwissenschaft, Instituto di Affari Internazionali, King's College, Kyoto University, Luiss University, Peace Research Institute Frankfurt.

1. Objectives

- promote awareness of resolution 1540 (2004);
- outline resolution 1540 (2004) implementation status and encourage international and regional coordination to expedite its implementation.

2. Background

The workshop was convened by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, jointly with the Italian Institute of International Affairs, as part of the preparation for Italy's assumption of the Presidency of the G-8 in 2009. It was arranged as a brainstorming session among arms control and non-proliferation experts from various governments, international organizations, and academic and research institutions. The workshop focused on three interrelated themes:

- assessing the threat of WMD terrorism;
- coordinating global and regional efforts to combat WMD terrorism;
- the role of the G-8 Global Initiative to combat global Terrorism (GICNT) and other initiatives.

3. Highlights

On behalf of the Italian Ministry of foreign Affairs, the Director for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation introduced the theme of the workshop, stressing that the most effective way to cope with the threat of

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WMD-related terrorism was through a concerted effort of the international community, comprising both global and regional efforts.

Presentations by various experts addressed the issue of threat assessment in terms of the likelihood of acquisition and use of WMD by terrorists, the narrowing gap between nefarious intention and technical capability by non-State actors, the catastrophic impact of such use even if of low probability at present; and the degrees of risk as between the use of different types of weapons of mass destruction and whether the response strategy should be fine-tuned.

Participants agreed that all terrorist threats need to be countered effectively and in a coordinated manner between international organizations and other multilateral bodies and complementary initiatives by Member States. Participants emphasized the importance of cooperation among the Security Council's counter-terrorism committees.

The 1540 Committee expert presented the main features of resolution 1540 (2004) and its goal to address the ramifications of the dangerous nexus between WMD and non-State actors. The methods used by the 1540 Committee to facilitate and monitor implementation of the resolution were highlighted, as well as the important contributions of the EU and of individual Member States to the outreach work of the 1540 Committee. Participants acknowledged the importance of new efforts being made to achieve fuller implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

4. **Additional comments**

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