

Information Note¹

Event:	“Seminar on the Development of the International Centre for Chemical Safety and Security”
Date and Location:	27-28 October 2011, Tarnow, Poland
Organizers or Sponsors:	Azoty Tarnow, OPCW, Government of Poland
Participants:	<i>States:</i> Kenya, Poland (multiple agencies), and the United States <i>International Organizations:</i> North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear (CBRN) weapons Center of Excellence, Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), and the 1540 Committee experts <i>Others:</i> Azoty Tarnow (and Group Azoty), Development and Security Association (Ukraine), Military University of Warsaw, Warclow Technical University, and the Polish Chemical Industry Chamber

1. Objectives for participating in the workshop

- The organizers explicitly make furthering implementation of resolution 1540 as one of the overall objectives of the workshop: “The seminar will support the broader efforts to prevent the misuse of CBRN agents in general, in line with UNSC resolution 1540 (2004) and relevant international commitments. “
- Identifying lessons learned to date in identifying and implementing synergies for capacity building in international cooperation in chemical safety and security. To create a unique opportunity to present in practice a set of chemical safety and security measures developed and implemented at a leading chemical company;
- Presentations on national and international experiences and perspectives of joint activities in the sphere of chemical safety and security, including the development of the Polish Center of Excellence on chemical safety and security;
- Identifying priorities “in developing or newly industrialising countries in addressing the problem of chemical safety and security,” which could lead to additional requests for and offers of assistance and possible match-making opportunities; and,
- Raising the importance of safe and secure handling of toxic chemicals as an important element in preventing terrorists in acquiring and using toxic chemicals as a means of terror and as an important element in national non-proliferation policies.

2. Background

The overall goal of the seminar is to assist developing or newly industrialising countries to establish/strengthen a collaborative framework at the international level for effective and coordinated action to address both national priorities in chemical safety and security as well as the implementation of international cooperation. The seminar is being actively supported by Polish ministries and agencies and leading academic and research centres in chemical safety and security as well as the OPCW.

¹ For information – not an official report. The views expressed here do not necessarily represent the view of the 1540 Committee nor of the organizers or participants in the workshop.

The seminar also builds on the cooperative activities between the 1540 Committee and the OPCW. Recent examples include:

- The April 2011 OPCW Seminar on the Contribution to Security and Nonproliferation, which recognized that the obligations of UNSCR 1540 in the area of chemical weapons are entirely consistent with those of the CWC and that full and effective domestic implementation of the CWC enables States parties to also fulfill their obligations under Resolution 1540.
- The OPCW Table top exercise (22-23 November 2010 in Warsaw) that was an element of Project VII of an EU Council Decision in 2009 on the preparedness of States Parties to the CWC on how to prevent and respond to attacks involving chemicals. This included preventing terrorist access to materials, equipment, and knowledge that could be used in the development and production of chemical weapons.

3. Highlights

No international or regional standards on securing and physically protecting chemical weapons related materials exist, nor does an international inventory of national best practices in chemical security exist. The international community also has relatively few experts in chemical security at its disposal. In response, the OPCW Special Projects unit, the Government of Poland, the City of Tarnow, and the Azoty chemical company have initiated the creation of a Center of Excellence for Chemical Safety and Security (CNSS), with the endorsement of several potential international partners.

The 1540 Committee expert presented information on the obligations of resolutions 1540 and 1977, and findings from the 2011 1540 Committee Report to the Security Council. The expert noted that the findings of the Committee show that while many more States have taken many more measures to implement resolution 1540, much work remains, including in the field of chemical security and physical protection. The OPCW did identify the US Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards as the first practical official chemical security program, as well as the private sector voluntary codes adopted by the American Chemical Council and the European Chemical Industry Council.

4. Additional comments

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