

Information Note¹

Event: A meeting of governmental experts on “UAV Transparency, Oversight and Accountability - Mapping Developments, Capabilities and Responses”.

Organizer: United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR)

Date and Venue: 15-16 November 2016, Geneva, Switzerland.

Participants: *Governmental Experts from:* Brazil, China, Columbia, France, Indonesia, Iraq, Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, Poland, Russian Federation, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States and Yemen.

International Organisations: United Nation Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), UN Human Right Commission and 1540 Committee Group of Experts.

Non-governmental Experts from: Oxford University UK, Electronic and Print Media, Center for New American Security (CNAS) Washington DC, PIR Center Moscow, Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) Tel- Aviv Israel, Article 36 UK, PAX for Peace Netherlands, Stimson Center Washington DC and ICRC.

Background

In the recent past armed unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) have become a prominent and sometimes controversial means of delivering lethal force in armed conflicts. The rapid developments in science and the technology, including miniaturisation and micro/nano technology contributes to their low cost, increasing payload capacity and precision. This leap forward in technological development in the field of UAVs could lead to their misuse by non-State actors to adapt and use them as a delivery means for weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

The Director of UNIDIR, in a letter addressed to the Chair dated 11 October 2016, invited a 1540 Expert to participate in the meeting and make a presentation within the context of the session entitled *Existing mechanisms for transparency in armed UAV capabilities and transfers*, from 15 to 16 November 2016.

1. **Highlights**

The meeting was attended by total of 30 participants including two from UNIDIR. The governmental experts were mostly from ministries of defence or foreign affairs. The non-governmental experts included academics, researchers and a journalist. The focus of the meeting was essentially on armed UAVs and their proliferation and likelihood of illicit use by non-State actors. However, in the discussion it was highlighted that besides armed UAVs, due to the rapid advancements in science and technology, UAVs not specifically designed to deliver weapons might also be adapted to deliver WMD, particularly chemical and biological weapons by non-state actors, especially terrorists.

2. **Additional comments**

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

¹ For information – not an official report. The views expressed here do not necessarily represent those of the 1540 Committee or of the organisers or participants in the event.