

Information Note¹

Event: Visit to Trinidad and Tobago, at its invitation, to discuss the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004)

Organizers: Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Date and Venue: 17-19 April 2013, Trinidad and Tobago

Participants: Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of National Security, and Minister of Health

Representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of National Security, Ministry of Energy and Energy Affairs, Ministry of Finance and the Economy, Ministry of Health, Ministry of the Attorney General, Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Transport, Tobago House of Assembly

Statutory Boards and other Bodies and Majority Owned Enterprises: Airports Authority, Port Authority of Trinidad and Tobago, Point Lisas Industrial Port Development Corporation Limited (PLIPDECO), Occupational Safety and Health Authority

International, regional, sub-regional organizations and other entities: UN interim Resident Coordinator and Representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization, CARICOM 1540 Regional Coordinator,

Civil society, private sector and academia: Customs Clerks and Brokers Association, Women's Institute for Alternative Development 1540 Committee (Chair, one Committee member and two experts)

1. Objectives

- Raise awareness of resolution 1540 (2004) among relevant national stakeholders, including with high-level authorities.
- Assess the status of implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).
- Facilitate gap analysis and identification of assistance needs.
- Discuss options for further work by Trinidad and Tobago, including the submission of additional information to supplement its first report and the option of a voluntary National Implementation Action Plan.

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

2. Background

- Resolution 1977 (2011) encouraged the 1540 Committee, with the support of necessary relevant expertise, to actively engage in dialogue with States on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), including through visits to States at their invitation.
- On 10 May 2012, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Communications of Trinidad and Tobago, extended a formal invitation to the 1540 Committee and its Group of experts to undertake a mission to be hosted by Trinidad and Tobago in collaboration with the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA).
- On 14 January 2013, the Chair of the 1540 Committee sent a formal communication to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago indicating that he had requested the Group of experts to contact the Permanent Mission of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Nations to define the details of the visit.

3. Highlights

The visit consisted of:

- consultations with high-level authorities;
- opening ceremony;
- a ministerial segment (first working session);
- working sessions with national stakeholders;
- on-site visits.

Preparatory meetings took place, in New York with the Permanent Mission of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Nations, and in Port of Spain, with authorities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The 1540 Committee experts also received an informative briefing from the UN interim Resident Coordinator on UN activities in Trinidad and Tobago.

3.1 Consultations with high level authorities

The 1540 Chair, Ambassador Kim Sook, and the 1540 Committee experts met with:

- the Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, **Mr. Winston Dookeran**;
- the Minister of National Security, **Mr. Austin Jack Warner**; and,
- the Minister of Health, **Dr. Fuad Khan**.

3.2 Opening ceremony

The 1540 Chair, Ambassador Kim Sook, as well as the Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Winston Dookeran, addressed the opening ceremony attended by national stakeholders, members of the diplomatic corps and a representative of the Executive Team of the Office of the Prime Minister.

3.3 Ministerial segment (first working session)

The first working session of the workshop was addressed by the Minister of National Security, Mr. Austin Jack Warner and the Minister of Health, Dr. Fuad Khan.

3.4 Working sessions with national stakeholders

The working sessions were moderated by the following representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Ambassador Dennis Francis, Director of the Multilateral Relations Division; Ambassador Eden Charles, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Nations, New York; and Ms. Yolande Wilkinson, Legal Affairs Officer. . Relevant government stakeholders, representatives of the private sector and civil society, as well as the CARICOM Regional Coordinator for resolution 1540 (2004), Mr. O’Neil Hamilton, participated in these sessions.

Presentations by the 1540 Committee experts

The 1540 Committee experts delivered presentations on key aspects of resolution 1540 (2004), to raise awareness of the resolution among national stakeholders and facilitate discussions on existing gaps and possible next steps. In accordance with the agenda prepared by the host, topics covered by the experts included:

- Key obligations stemming from resolution 1540 (2004);
- Resolution 1540 (2004) as a tool to combat proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-State actors;
- The cooperative dimensions of resolution 1540 (2004);
- Assistance and capacity-building;
- The 1540 Committee Matrix;
- Proliferation financing;
- Reports to the 1540 Committee and the option of a voluntary National Implementation Action Plan;
- International cooperation in the context of resolution 1540 (2004);
- The role of the private sector, academic institutions and civil society.

Thematic discussions

Thematic discussions took place on:

- Adaptation of the legal framework;

- Border controls;
- Physical protection and accounting measures;
- International cooperation and the role of CARICOM;
- National coordination mechanisms and the option of a National Implementation Action Plan;
- Private sector, academic institutions and civil society.

3.5 On-site visits

The host country organized on-site visits to the Port of Point Lisas and to the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA).

Port of Point Lisas / Point Lisas Industrial Estate

The President of the Point Lisas Industrial Port Development Corporation Limited (PLIPDECO) welcomed the Chairman and the 1540 Committee experts. PLIPDECO is a public company owned 51% by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and 49% by private shareholders including banks, insurance companies, financial institutions, company employees and the general public. PLIPDECO was established in 1966. Its two core activities are:

- Industrial real estate management (Point Lisas Industrial Estate);
- Port management and operations, including cargo handling services (Port of Point Lisas).

PLIPDECO is the owner and landlord of the 860-hectare Point Lisas Industrial Estate. The Estate houses more than 103 tenants comprising a mix of major methanol, ammonia and urea plants, three steel plants, a power plant, and smaller light manufacturing and service companies.

The Port of Point Lisas is the second major port in Trinidad and Tobago. With its six commercial berths, the port handles a wide range of traffic including dry and liquid bulks, containers, general cargo and breakbulk servicing both the individual and business sectors alike.

The delegation visited the office of the Customs and Excise Division located on the premises and was briefed on the procedures in place to fight illicit activities. The Customs Officers underscored the importance of accurate and timely intelligence to fulfill their tasks.

Caribbean Public Health Agency

The 1540 Committee experts visited the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA), based in Port of Spain, and met the Executive Director of the Agency, Dr. Carl James Hospedales. He highlighted that CARPHA was recently established as an inter-governmental Agency funded by Caribbean governments from the merger of five pre-existing regional health institutions, namely the Caribbean Epidemiology Centre (CAREC), Caribbean Health Research Council (CHRC), Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute (CFNI), Caribbean Environmental Health Institute

(CEHI) and the Caribbean Research Drug Testing Laboratory (CRDTL). The newly-formed Agency began operations in January 2013.

The Caribbean Public Health Agency is considered a critical resource in strengthening laboratory capacity and bio-risk management in the Caribbean region, which reinforces capacities for early detection and management of potential natural or deliberate disease outbreaks.

4. **Outcome**

As a consequence of heightened awareness of the national security implications implicit in resolution 1540 (2004), a firm commitment was secured from the highest authorities in Trinidad and Tobago to continue to take necessary measures to fully implement resolution 1540 (2004). It was also helpful to raise awareness among national stakeholders from various professions, including the private sector.

In the course of the visit, national stakeholders identified implementation achievements, gaps and challenges to be addressed. They also discussed possible next steps and acknowledged the value of maintaining and strengthening inter-departmental dialogue in order to ensure coherence and complementarity.

5. **Additional comments**

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