

Information Note¹

Event: Strategic Trade Control Enforcement (STCE) Programme workshop

Organizer: World Customs Organization (WCO)

Date and Venue: 31 January – 3 February 2022, Virtual event

Participants: Customs Services from Algeria, Burkina Faso, Canada, Senegal and Mauritania.

Background

On 6 January 2022, the Secretary General of World Customs Organization (WCO), sent a letter to the Chair of the 1540 Committee inviting a 1540 Committee Expert to participate in a virtual regional francophone Africa workshop in the framework of the Strategic Trade Control Enforcement (STCE) Programme assisting UN Member States to implement United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004).

This meeting was of direct relevance to the 1540 Committee with regard to the following operative paragraphs (OPs) of resolution 2325 (2016):

- OP1. Reiterates its decisions in and the requirements of resolution 1540 (2004), and re-emphasizes the importance for all States to implement fully and effectively that resolution;
- OP12. Decides that the 1540 Committee shall continue to intensify its efforts to promote the full implementation by all States of resolution 1540 (2004), through its Programme of Work, which includes the compilation and general examination of information on the status of States' implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) and addresses all aspects of paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of that resolution, particularly noting the need for more attention on: enforcement measures; measures relating to biological, chemical and nuclear weapons; proliferation finance measures; accounting for and securing related materials; and national export and transshipment controls;
- OP14. Recalls its decision that all States shall take and enforce effective measures to establish domestic controls to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery, including by establishing appropriate control over related materials, and calls upon States that have not done so to start developing effective national control lists at the earliest opportunity for the implementation of 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.

- OP22. Encourages the Committee to develop, in collaboration with international, regional and subregional organizations, assistance projects to support States in implementing resolution 1540 (2004) in order to facilitate the prompt and direct response to assistance requests.

Highlights

The webinar took place from 31 January to 3 February 2022 and was delivered mostly in French with real-time translation in English. The meeting was attended by up to 23 participants from the customs agencies of Francophone African countries (Algeria, Burkina Faso and Mauritania and Senegal). A representative of Canada's Customs agency also participated. The participation of the 1540 Expert was an opportunity to contribute to the workshop to enhance awareness of resolution 1540 (2004), in particular OP3 c&d on export control measures.

The webinar was opened by Mr. James McColm, WCO's Programme Manager for Compliance and Enforcement. He observed that dual-use goods are commonly used in civilian and peaceful activities but can also be diverted to WMD proliferation activities. Fighting proliferation risks requires Member States to establish border controls and appropriate control lists. He referred to the necessity for Customs to be continuously educated. Hoping that the sanitary conditions linked to the pandemic would improve in order to organize events in the in-presence format again, he thanked all the participants for their participation in this webinar in the French language bringing together several African Countries.

The 1540 Expert made a presentation on resolution 1540 (2004), starting with an overview of the resolution itself and related key obligations, and some definitions drawing on the scope of the resolution: Non-state actor, NBC-weapons related materials, means of delivery. The Expert delivered a brief overview of resolution 1540 requirements, including their complementarities with some other international legal instruments (NPT, BWC, CWC, 1925 Geneva Protocol), and focused on OP3c&d dealing with export controls. The Expert detailed activities that must be controlled (export, transit, trans-shipment and re-export, as well as the providing of funds and services that could contribute to proliferation). The concepts of control lists and end-user controls were raised. Involvement of all relevant national Ministries as well as international cooperation was also promoted as a way to detect, deter, prevent and combat illicit trafficking and brokering. The Expert also described resolution 1540's requirements to enforce appropriate criminal or civil penalties for violations of such export control measures. An overview of resolution 1540's level of implementation provided an opportunity for introducing the 1540 Committee's tool kit: reporting and matrices, Voluntary National Implementation Action Plans (NAPs) and the assistance mechanism.

Outreach by the Committee has been identified as a key challenge in the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) by Member States, requiring continuous assistance, ideally in an international or regional format.

Additional Comments

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