

## Information Note<sup>1</sup>

- Event:** EU Workshop in Support of the BWC Action Extended Assistance Programmes
- Organizer:** EU Delegation to the UN and other International Organizations and the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs, Geneva
- Venue and Date:** 13 June 2013, Geneva, Switzerland
- Participants:** Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, European Union (EU), UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (ODA), World Health Organization (WHO), Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), UN Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI)/EU CBRN CoE Initiative, UN 1540 Committee expert, Verification Research, Training and Information Centre (VERTIC), Independent Consultant (The Trench)

### 1. Objectives of the meeting

To exchange information, by assistance providers, on experiences and best practices for ensuring a successful outcome of assistance programmes, possibilities for coordination and, if appropriate, cooperation to avoid duplication, and an exchange of information on the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC) Action assistance programmes.

### 2. Background

The European Union (EU) Delegation to the United Nations (UN) and other International Organizations and the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs in Geneva invited the 1540 Committee to participate in a workshop in support of the BWC. The workshop was held in the context of the European Union Council decision in support of the BWC, adopted on 23 July 2012, as Council decision 2012/421/CFSP. This support includes extended assistance programmes with the objective of promoting universal adherence to the BWC and enhancing national capabilities for implementing obligations under the BWC, including the submission of Confidence Building Measures (CBM).

### 3. Highlights of discussions

Regarding resolution 1540 (2004), presentations were made on the issue of assistance in the 1540 context, including on the procedure for, and current status of, assistance requests in terms of the resolution. Presentations were also made by relevant EU experts on their experiences with the implementation of the EU Joint Action on the BWC for the period 2009-2011, including highlighting the need for points of contact for planning outreach meetings, the usefulness of standard presentations that convey a common message to the stakeholders, and the importance of follow-up. The need for coordination between those that provide assistance was also emphasised. VERTIC also provided information on, amongst others, their cooperation and support provided on the drafting of legislation.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

An overview was also provided on the assistance programmes of the OPCW, the WHO related to laboratory biorisk management and of the 1540 Committee's assistance mandate, methodology and mechanism. In this regard, EU funding facilitated the planning of multi-year assistance programmes by the OPCW with a high degree of financial certainty. Regarding biorisk management, reference was made to the management system certification as the mechanism whereby an independent assurance can be provided that the activities to be addressed are being managed in a responsible and proportionate manner.

The Implementation Support Unit of the BWC outlined their activities undertaken in the context of the EU funded BWC Action programme, and referred to the implementation of the new programme where they will require experts to assist with this implementation plan.

#### 4. **Additional comments**

For further information, please contact the 1540 group of experts by e-mail at [1540experts@un.org](mailto:1540experts@un.org).