

Information Note¹

Event:	Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) Conference Week for East Asia and the Pacific
Organizers:	Governments of the Philippines, Australia and the United States, and UNODA (Geneva Branch) with the support of the European Union Joint Action on the BWC
Date and Venue:	27 June-1 July 2011, Manila, Philippines
Participants:	<i>ASEAN Member States:</i> Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam (Brunei Darussalam, invited, could not attend) <i>Other States:</i> Australia, China, Japan, Republic of Korea, United Kingdom, United States <i>Other:</i> European Union <i>International organizations:</i> BWC-ISU, UNODA (Geneva Branch), WHO, 1540 Committee experts <i>Civil society:</i> VERTIC

1. Objectives

- Dialogue with relevant government entities on sharing practices and options to facilitate further implementation of requirements of resolution 1540 in complementary to the implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC);
- Obtain updated information on the status of implementation of resolution 1540 (2004);
- Dialogue with international and regional organizations on practices on bio-security and bio-safety that are relevant to facilitate implementation of biological aspects of resolution 1540 (2004);
- Obtain updates on assistance delivery programmes and on assistance needs;
- Discuss actions to be considered by States, such as the submission of more detailed reports on the status of implementation and/or a voluntary summary action plan mapping out priorities and plans for implementing resolution 1540 (2004);
- Expand the network of working contact

2. Background

The Conference Week comprised the following three back-to-back events:

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.

- a Regional Workshop on National Implementation of the BWC in East Asia and the Pacific (27-28 June 2011), organized by UNODA (Geneva Branch) with support from the EU Joint Action on the BWC²;
- a Workshop on Building Capacity for Prevention, Preparedness and Response (29 June 2011) organized by the US Department of State;
- a Seminar on Issues for the Seventh Review Conference of the BWC (30 June – 1 July 2011) organized by Australia.

All ASEAN States have submitted a report to the 1540 Committee. Of the 13 UN Member States that have requested that their Matrix is not published on the 1540 Committee website, 4 are from this region. According to the data compiled in the Matrices approved by the 1540 Committee, the biological area is, in this region, an area in which fewer 1540-relevant measures have been identified (compared to the nuclear and chemical areas).

3. **Highlights**

Welcome and opening remarks were given by: Undersecretary Nabil Tan, Executive Director of the Anti Terrorism Council, Office of the Executive Secretary, Office of the President of the Philippines; Ambassador Petr Hooton, Australian Department of foreign Affairs and Trade; the Head of the EU Delegation to the Philippines Ambassador Guy Ledoux; Executive Secretary Paquito Ochoa Jr, Office of the President of the Philippines; Mr Jejomar Erwin Binay, Mayor of Makati City.

A message from Ambassador Paul van den IJssel, President-designate of the BWC Seventh Review Conference listed areas of interest to delegations revealed during informal consultations: the future of the intersessional process; the confidence-building measures; the need for means to monitor and assess developments in science and technology; strengthening international cooperation and assistance activities and the implementation of article X of the Convention; possibilities for compliance and verification; universalization of the Convention.

The 1540 Committee experts delivered a presentation on *the complementarity of implementing the BWC and resolution 1540 (2004)*, highlighting the key features of the resolution, which affirms the support of the Security Council for the multilateral treaties whose aim is to eliminate or prevent the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, and which calls upon all States to promote the universal adoption and full implementation, and, where necessary, strengthening of multilateral treaties to which they are parties, whose aim is to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, biological or chemical weapons. Although the BWC and resolution 1540 (2004) are different in scope and in nature, they tend to be complementary and mutually reinforcing in the objectives they assign to States. The experts underscored some of the differences between the two instruments, such as having resolution 1540 (2004) being mandatory for all States (while the current status of the BWC is 164 States Parties and 13 signatories), or calling for the prohibition of possession, transport and use of biological weapons by non-State actors. By specifying the different obligations placed upon all States by resolution 1540 (2004), the 1540 Committee experts contributed to highlighting the biological dimensions and implications of the resolution, including in terms of biosafety and biosecurity under operative paragraph 3. Using the data compiled in the 1540 Committee matrices, the experts presented the status of implementation of the resolution in the region, characterized by fewer measures in the

² Joint Action 2008/858/CFSP of 10 November 2008 (can be accessed from: <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/eeas/foreign-policy/non-proliferation,-disarmament-and-export-control/-documentation/documents.aspx?lang=en>)

biological area (compared to the nuclear and chemical areas), in particular in areas covered by operative paragraph 3 of the resolution. The presentation underscored that full implementation of resolution 1540 is a long-term task. During the discussion, the possibility was raised of encouraging joint activities between the 1540 Committee and the BWC-ISU in direction of States.

A 1540 Committee expert delivered a presentation on capacity-building, cooperation and assistance in the context of resolution 1540 (2004), mentioning relevant provisions of resolutions 1540 (2004), 1810 (2008) and 1977 (2011) and describing the clearinghouse role of the 1540 Committee to facilitate match-making between requests and offers of assistance. The expert described the revised procedures adopted in October 2010 by the Committee, explaining that assistance requests are now relayed by the Committee to potential providers of assistance within one week after they have been received and that the 1540 Committee experts conduct informal match-making on advice of the requesting State. Recognizing the existence of other clearinghouse mechanisms and channels at the disposal of States to convey requests of assistance, the experts highlighted the specificities of the 1540 Committee clearinghouse function, noting that the decision to resort to a mechanism or another is the sovereign responsibility of States.

The representatives of different participating States discussed ongoing efforts at the national level on biosafety and biosecurity and to combat bioterrorism, sharing experience in these areas.

Different issues related to the forthcoming BWC Review Conference were discussed, in particular during the Australia-sponsored 30 June – 1 July 2011 event. Among them:

- the universalization of the BWC;
- the confidence-building measures mechanism;
- a new intersessional process for 2012-2015;
- compliance;
- review of advances in science and technology;
- the role and future of the Implementation Support Unit;
- assistance under Article VII of the BWC;
- international cooperation under article X of the BWC.

4. Bilateral consultations

The 1540 Committee experts met informally with various State delegations to discuss the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

5. Additional comments

Summaries by the Vice-Chairs and other relevant information are available at:

[http://www.unog.ch/80256EE600585943/\(httpPages\)/46B88DB8B36BD316C12578E60043CED2?OpenDocument](http://www.unog.ch/80256EE600585943/(httpPages)/46B88DB8B36BD316C12578E60043CED2?OpenDocument)

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