Seminar on Effective Practices of the Implementation of UNSCR 1540

19-20 September 2013, Rakitje, Croatia

Organised in cooperation with the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) and the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Croatia.

Introduction

The Seminar on Effective Practices of the Implementation of UNSCR 1540 was an unprecedented pilot project activity co-organized by RACVIAC - Centre for Security Cooperation, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) and the Croatian Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (MFEA).

The seminar focused on the identification and distribution of effective practices in the implementation of UNSCR 1540 and exploring the situation regarding National Implementation Action Plans (NIAPs) in respective member countries, from the point of view of ministries, international organizations and customs services with a view to fighting the proliferation of illicit weapons and dual-use goods. The seminar emphasized that the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, including to non-State actors, remains a threat to international peace and security.

Among the seminar objectives were:
- To provide information about the possibilities of the identification and distribution of effective practices in the implementation of UNSCR 1540;
- To give an insight into the current situation regarding National Implementation Action Plans (NIAPs);
- To outline the information and lessons learned related to UNSCR 1540;
- To provide an update on the activities related to UNSCR 1540, educational activities, customs procedures and perspectives for the future.

The seminar participants came from the following countries: Albania (1), Bosnia and Herzegovina (3), Croatia (3), the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* (1), Montenegro (2), Serbia (2), Turkey (1), and international organisations such as the UNODC (1) and OPCW (1). They were both senior and junior military and civilian recommendation makers dealing with the UNSCR 1540 issues.

The Seminar was conducted with the assistance of 3 lecturers from Croatia: Ms Ljiljana Lepotinček, Ms Sanja Bujas-Juraga...
and Ms Vesna Focht, 1 lecturer from Belarus (Mr Vasily Pavlov), Kyrgyzstan (Mr Timur Cherkov), Serbia (Amb. Branka Latinović), the UN 1540 Committee (Mr Nicolas Kasprzyk), the US Department of State (Mr Richard Cupitt) and two lecturers from the OSCE (Ms Adriana Volenikova and Mr Anton Martyniuk).

First working day

It was carried out as a combination of lectures and presentations followed by questions and answers and round table discussions. This seminar was designed with the aim of sharing expertise, opinions and lessons learned, identifying problems and finding possible solutions, as well as exploring the way ahead. It also provided a favourable environment and atmosphere for valuable and focused discussions.

The Execution

The seminar was opened on 19 September 2013 with a welcome address by RACVIAC Deputy Director Brigadier General Zdravko Jakop. This was followed by opening remarks given by Vesna Batistić-Kos, PhD, Assistant Minister for Multilateral Affairs and Global Issues (MFEA HR) and MAG Chairperson and Mr Nikita Smidovich, Political Advisor of the UNODA, who emphasized the role of the 1540 Committee, the recent extension of its mandate till April 2021 and the “country-specific dialogue” developed by the UNODA. Finally, the floor was given to Mr Nicolas Kasprzyk, the 1540 expert of the UN 1540 Committee, who was an excellent moderator of the two-day event during the majority of sessions.

During the first day (Thursday, 19 September) the following topics were presented:

- **Update on the Status of the Implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004)** by Mr Nicolas Kasprzyk, the 1540 expert of the UN 1540 Committee. He gave a brief overview of the work of the UN 1540 Committee, whose mandate ends only in 2021 – it was prolonged for ten years, which was an unprecedented step. Generally such mandates can get a 2-3 year prolongation, but in this case even a prolongation for an indefinite period was an option. Special emphasis was put on the Committees’ cooperation with other international organisations.

- **Croatian National Strategy for Non-proliferation of WMD** by Ms Sanja Bujas-Juraga, Head of Division for International Security, MFEA Croatia. She gave an overview of the national implementation of UNSCR 1540, with an emphasis on Croatia’s strong commitment to its implementation. She also highlighted two joint events with Poland on this topic. The delicacy of Croatia’s geopolitical situation was also highlighted.

- **The Challenges and Effectiveness of the Adoption of National Action Plan 1540** were outlined by Ambassador Branka Latinović, Head of Arms Control Department, MFA Serbia.

- **A Comprehensive Approach to Prevention of Proliferation of WMD: The**
Belarus National Framework Document on Additional Measures to Implement the UNSCR 1540 was presented by Mr Vasily Pavlov, Senior Counsellor, Department of International Security and Arms Control, MFA of Belarus.

The two presentations informed the participants about the state of implementation of UNSCR 1540 in these two respective countries, outlining the development of National Action Plan 1540, the ways its implementation is monitored and the relevant legal framework.

• National Implementation Action Plan for the Resolution 1540 of the Kyrgyz Republic by Mr Timur Cherikov, Deputy Director, Center for Nonproliferation and export control, Kyrgyzstan, who provided information on the possibilities and capabilities of the Kyrgyz Republic to identify and apply effective practices in the implementation of UNSCR 1540.

• OSCE Activities to Support the NIAP Process of Its Member States by Ms Adriana Volenikova, OSCE Secretariat Conflict Prevention Centre, Vienna, who outlined the OSCE activities aimed at fostering NIAPs and implementation of UNSCR 1540.

During the second day (Friday, 20 September) the following topics were presented:

• National Practices in Implementing Resolution 1540 by Mr Richard Cupitt, 1540 Coordinator, US Department of State. He gave an insight into the efforts of the United States towards the implementation of Resolution 1540 and outlined the role of the Department of Homeland Security. Mr Cupitt emphasized the importance of the intergovernmental coordination to lessen the proliferation risk, as well as the communication and provision of information to the stakeholders. He pointed out that the Department of Homeland Security invests a lot of effort into these activities.

• Croatian Export Control Legislation after 1st of July 2013, by Ms Vesna Focht, Senior Counsellor Specialist, State Office for Trade Policy, Croatia. She gave an overview of the legal background concerning Croatia's implementation of the UNSCR 1540 and elaborated on the inter-ministerial commission responsible for the coordination of these efforts.

• Implementation of UN SC 1540 - Customs View by Ms Ljiljana Lepotinec, Head of Department, Ministry of Finance, Customs Administration, Service for Customs Control, Croatia. She underlined the importance of the Automated Risk Analysis that covers the whole territory of the Republic of Croatia and has 4 levels, green, yellow, orange and red to categorize the goods coming in the country in terms of risks.

During the second day there was a round table discussion on effective practices in supporting the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1540.
The final part of the seminar was devoted to the evaluation and the closing ceremony.

**Conclusion**

Thanks to the cooperation between RACVIAC, the UNODA and the MFEA of the Republic Croatia, the presence of high-level lecturers was ensured. Their professionalism and experience, as well as their presentations, were highly appreciated by the participants. According to the participants’ evaluation provided at the end of the event, the seminar was successful, very interesting and well organized. Most of the participants were members of the national authorities and relevant organizations dealing with the UNSCR 1540 issues in their countries and they considered it valuable for their future work.

The participants were highly motivated during the seminar and they showed deep interest in the subject matter. They expressed various ideas regarding the topics for possible future activities, which may prove to be a valuable source of needs assessment. In particular, they reinforced the need to put greater emphasis on the details regarding national implementation and shorten the general part. The following topics and suggestions were singled out as interesting for future seminars:

- Focus on bio-security as connected with UNSCR 1540 and effective practices;
- A seminar or workshop with a greater focus on the region of SEE;
- An extended event with the UNODA including experts from a broader area.

These recommendations will certainly be taken into consideration by the co-organizers in the course of preparations for the next year’s activity.

This event proved to be a good example of a strong cooperation among RACVIAC, the UNODA and the MFEA of Croatia. As UNSCR 1540 requires every state to criminalize the involvement of various forms of non-state actors in weapons of mass destruction and related activities in their national legislation and, once in place, to enforce such legislation, RACVIAC stands ready to support this global, universal obligation and, in cooperation with the partners in this successful event, to continue promoting UNSCR 1540 and the NIAPs.

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*Turkey recognizes the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.*