

13 December 2007

VERTIC statement to OPCW Open-Ended Group Meeting to discuss CWC issues

Rocio Escauriaza, VERTIC's Research Assistant, participated in a meeting on 19 November 2007 at the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) organized by the OPCW Open-Ended Group for the Second Review Conference. The meeting provided an opportunity for academics, NGOs and experts on the field, along with representatives from national delegations to the OPCW, to discuss issues concerning the forthcoming Second Review Conference of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). It enabled participants to express their perspectives on the operation of the CWC to date, prior to the review conference.

The chairman of the Open-Ended Group, Ambassador Lyn Parker, OPCW Director General Ambassador Rogelio Pflirter and the OPCW Scientific Advisory Board addressed the group at the outset, followed by presentations and statements from the invited participants.

In VERTIC's statement, Rocio emphasized the necessity of adopting CWC national implementation measures, in particular penalizing prohibited activities and regulating transfers of scheduled chemicals. She urged States Parties to comply with CWC provisions in light of the advancement of sciences and the anticipated failure of some States Parties to meet CWC destruction deadlines. She also noted that the adoption of new verification methods and techniques, including the conduction of challenge inspections, could help redress the imbalance between stockpile destruction verification and monitoring of schedule 2 and 3 facilities.

The meeting concluded with a general discussion session.

VERTIC's statement to the OPCW NGO meeting:

[English](#) (PDF 102kb).

[Spanish](#) (PDF 112kb)

[OPCW press release](#) on the meeting

12 December 2007

VERTIC and the LSE BIOS Centre release report

Today, VERTIC, together with the London School of Economics BIOS Centre released a report on 'National Data Collection Processes for CBM Submissions'. The report was presented to a [Geneva Forum](#) event entitled 'Building Confidence in the Biological & Toxic Weapons Convention: The Way Forward'. The event was attended by almost a hundred diplomates. Delegates engaged in lively discussion on options for improving the CBM process

Speakers included:

Mr Richard Lennane, Head, BWC Implementation Support Unit

Dr Filippa Lentzos, BIOS Centre, London School of Economics

Amb. Jürg Streuli, Deputy Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the United Nations, Geneva, Switzerland.

The meeting was chaired by Mr Patrick McCarthy, Network Coordinator at the Geneva Forum

Download the full [report](#) (PDF 167k)

11 December 2007

VERTIC Director stresses importance of national implementing legislation at BWC States Parties meeting

Angela Woodward, Executive Director, shared highlights from VERTIC's National Implementation Measures (NIM) project at an NGO panel discussion on 10 December 2007 during the current meeting of States Parties to the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) in Geneva, Switzerland. In her presentation, 'Practical contributions of civil society to national implementation and regional cooperation', Angela noted that many States Parties still lack comprehensive penal provisions covering all activities prohibited under the Convention. In addition, legislative frameworks governing biosecurity and transfer controls, as well as their monitoring and enforcement are also lacking in many States. She urged all BWC States Parties assess regularly the adequacy and effectiveness of their existing national measures to enforce the Convention and adopt and enforce any additional measures that may be required. Tasking a national focal point with BWC

implementation requirements, as called for by the BWC Sixth Review Conference, would greatly facilitate this process.

Angela also noted that members of civil society are stakeholders in implementation processes and have an important role to play in ensuring effective national implementation, in collaboration with efforts undertaken by States Parties and relevant international organizations. To this end, she concluded her presentation with an interactive demonstration of the key features of VERTIC's NIM website (www.vertic.org/NIM), which brings together a variety of practical resources relating to national implementation of the BWC, as well as the major nuclear and chemical weapons treaties and UN Security Council Resolution 1540.

[English](#) (PDF 107kb)

[Spanish](#) (PDF 111kb)

29 November 2007

VERTIC attends phase II workshop of verification project

On 27-29 November 2007, Angela Woodward and Andreas Persbo attended the first phase II workshop on the verification of nuclear arms reductions. The meeting was facilitated by the UK Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) and held at their Blacknest facility. The workshop participants, who were drawn from various institutes in Norway and the United Kingdom, also visited the AWE's sites in Aldermaston and in Burghfield. At the end of the workshop, the participating institutes and governments agreed on several practical projects to be concluded in the coming year. The parameters and some details of an on-site inspection exercise were examined, and a work schedule agreed. Moreover, design parameters, and user specifications of a very simple information barrier was discussed in detail and agreed.

The workshop marks the beginning of the second phase of a process that started with a VERTIC facilitated roundtable on 20 February 2007. VERTIC looks forward to an exciting continuation of the project in Norway in early 2008.

22 November 2007

VERTIC researcher member of ILA International Committee

On 17 November, VERTIC's nuclear law and policy researcher Andreas Persbo's nomination to the newly formed International Law Association Committee on Nuclear weapons, non proliferation & contemporary international law was approved by the Association's Executive Council. The committee will be chaired by Dr Jonathan L Black-Branch (United Kingdom). Dr Dieter Fleck (Germany) will act as its rapporteur. The [International Law Association](#) was founded in Brussels in 1873. Its objectives, under its Constitution, are "the study, clarification and development of international law, both public and private, and the furtherance of international understanding and respect for international law". The ILA has consultative status, as an international non-governmental organization, with a number of the United Nations specialized agencies. The Association has about 3,700 members around the world. Andreas was elected into the Swedish branch of the association earlier this year.

16 November 2007

VERTIC Executive Director delivers presentation on UNSCR 1540

VERTIC Executive Director, Angela Woodward attended a workshop on 'The Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and International Humanitarian Law-Current Challenges, Effective Responses', San Remo, 16 November 2007. Participants included experts on international humanitarian law and experts on issues concerning the non proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Angela's presentation was entitled 'The UNSCR 1540 on weapons of mass destruction and terrorism: a step in the right direction?'

3 October 2007

VERTIC/ACA CTBT seminar report

On 18 September 2007, VERTIC and the Washington DC based Arms Control Association organized a seminar on, amongst other things, the verifiability of the 1996 Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

This [report](#) (PDF, 901k) outlines some of the discussions at that meeting. Presentations and notes from the seminar will be made available at a later date.

Angela Woodward teaching law at LSE

VERTIC's Executive Director, Angela Woodward, will teach Public International Law at the prestigious London School of Economics over the next year. Topics include the nature of international law, UN law, national implementation, and sources and methods of international law.

... and the move completed.

VERTIC has now moved into slightly smaller offices. We apologize for any inconvenience that this may have caused.

20 September 2007

VERTIC is on the move

We are moving during the week beginning Monday, 24 September 2007, swapping offices with another NGO at the end of our corridor on the third floor of Development House. We hope to be operational for most of this time, but there will be a short period mid-week when we will not be able to access our emails or receive phone calls. We expect to be fully operational by Monday, 1 October 2007.

18 September 2007

VERTIC/ACA seminar huge success

Over 100 delegates to the CTBTO Article XIV conference in Vienna attended the joint Arms Control Association (ACA) / VERTIC seminar, 'The CTBT: achievements, challenges and opportunities'. This record-breaking audience for VERTIC's traditional conference side event heard the following presentations before joining in a lively Q&A session.

Introduction

Mr. Andreas Persbo
Nuclear Law and Policy Researcher, VERTIC, London

Prospects of U.S. Ratification

Mr. Daryl G. Kimball
Executive Director, Arms Control Association, Washington DC

CTBT Verification: A Decade of Achievement

Professor David Hafemeister
Professor of Physics (Emeritus), California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo

CTBT Verification: Challenges Ahead

Ambassador Jaap Ramaker, Special Representative

The seminar, held on Tuesday, 18 September 2007 at the Kleiner Redoutensaal in the Hofburg Congress Center, was the latest in a series of seminars organized by VERTIC for the biannual entry into force and other CTBTO meetings. VERTIC and the Arms Control Association are grateful to the governments of Ireland, Germany and Norway for funding the event.

Presentations, statements, and a summary report will be made available on the VERTIC and ACA website within the next two weeks.

15 September 2007

VERTIC appoints new director

Angela Woodward has been appointed VERTIC's fifth executive director. She is taking over after Michael Crowley, who recently left the organization to pursue a doctoral degree at Bradford University. Angela, who has been with the organization for more than seven years, brings with her a wealth of experience in international arms control and disarmament law, specifically in the area of biological arms control and verification, where she currently serves as a UK legal expert. In addition of being a lecturer of international law at the London School of Economics, she is also intimately familiar with the workings of the organization. This will ensure a smooth transition between directors.

She will be the second female director in the organization's history. The first was Patricia Lewis, who led the organization for ten years between 1987 and 1997. Angela is also from New Zealand. This means that she will be the second director born and bred in a country on the Pacific Rim. Trevor Findlay, VERTIC's third director, was from Australia. Indeed, the organization has had a tendency to select directors coming from island states. VERTIC's second and fourth executive directors, Patricia Lewis and Michael Crowley, were both Irish. Jeremy Leggett, the organization's founder and, according to Time Magazine "one of the key players in putting the climate issue on the world agenda", is British.

VERTIC, under Angela Woodward's leadership, looks forward to working with its partners across the world in achieving the organization's core objective, to build trust through verification.

11 September 2007

VERTIC/WMD AP/British Pugwash event at the 2007 BA Festival of Science

VERTIC joined British Pugwash and the WMD Awareness Programme to organize a two-part event, 'Nuclear swords into energy ploughshares' (panel discussion) and 'A global cleanout of nuclear weapons material' (keynote talk & drinks reception) at the 2007 BA Festival of Science, University of York, UK, 11 September 2007. Both events attracted 25-30 people, who engaged in a lively exchange of views with the speakers.

For more information, see the VERTIC briefing sheet and the BA Festival of Science press release below, or contact jane.awford [at] vertic.org or carol.naughton [at] comecclean.org.uk.

Nuclear swords into energy ploughshares' briefing sheet

[English](#) (PDF 100k)

BA Festival of Science press release

[English](#) (PDF 99k)

Speakers' biographies

[English](#) (PDF 507k)

Presentations

'Nuclear swords into energy ploughshares'

Introduction by James Acton, Chair and Lecturer, Centre for Science and Security, King's College, London.

[English](#) (PPS 72k)

Dr Thomas E. Shea, Professor, Nuclear Power and Nonproliferation, World Nuclear University (London)
(To follow)

Professor Bertrand Barré, Chair, International Nuclear Energy Academy; Professor Emeritus of Nuclear Engineering at the National Institute for Nuclear Science and Technology, France

[English](#) (PPS 3,999k)

Felicity Hill, Vice President, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)

[English](#) (PDF 59k)

'A global cleanout of nuclear-weapon materials'

Professor Frank von Hippel, Co-chair of the International Panel on Fissile Materials and Professor of Public and International Affairs, Princeton University, USA

[English](#) (PDF 1,299k)

6 September 2007

VERTIC acting director presents the organization's work at 1540 Committee Workshop in Amman, Jordan

The [1540 Committee](#) invited VERTIC to give a presentation at their regional [workshop](#) on UNSCR 1540 implementation held in Amman on 4-5 September 2007.

The workshop focused on the status of reporting and implementation of UNSCR 1540; on national experience in the region in implementing NBC Treaties; on the role of regional and inter-governmental

organizations; and on assistance to implement UNSCR 1540.

Angela Woodward gave a presentation on "Working with research institutions that assist in implementation efforts". She emphasized on the important role played by NGOs providing assistance to States implementing NBC Treaties; and presented VERTIC's latest product, the NIM website, which provides some essential national implementation tools and reference materials.

Angela's presentation is available in two language versions:

English; and

Spanish.

VERTIC's work in this important field is funded by the Global Opportunities Fund (GOF) and the Government of Holland.

22 August 2007

VERTIC staff attends concluding workshop of verification project

On 19-21 August 2007, Angela Woodward and Andreas Persbo attended a concluding three day workshop on the verification of nuclear arms reductions. The meeting was facilitated by the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment and held at the establishment's facilities at Kjeller, Norway. Participants were drawn from various institutes in Norway and the United Kingdom. At the end of the workshop, the participating institutes and governments agreed on issues for further examination and on a tentative work plan for the next six months. The workshop marks the end of the first phase of a process that started with a VERTIC facilitated roundtable on 20 February 2007.

VERTIC looks forward to an exciting continuation of the project, and to continue to contribute to the work of the group.

VERTIC's work on this project is funded by the The Norwegian Radiation Protection Authority (NRPA).

20 August 2007

VERTIC launches NIM website

VERTIC has launched its National Implementation Measures (NIM) website to bring together a wide range of materials to help states to implement effective national measures to meet their obligations under the major arms control and disarmament treaties, norms and other instruments related to nuclear, biological and chemical (NBC) weapons and materials.

To access the site, click on the 'national implementation' link at the top of the page or go to www.vertic.org/NIM.

'National implementation' is the process by which states take a variety of measures to bring their domestic law into conformity with their obligations under international law. These 'National Implementation Measures' may include laws, administrative procedures and regulations.

The NIM website features include: events, NIM tools and a reference section. NIM tools are categorized as legislative assistance, national authorities, state practice, model laws, export control, VERTIC NIM fact sheets, and a section of guides, handbooks and checklists. Reference information includes: an acronym list; texts and subsidiary information for treaties, UN resolutions, bilateral and multilateral agreements; legislation and other databases; other implementation issues and analysis; background documents, including general background information and more scholarly analysis; and counter-terrorism legislation and resources.

VERTIC is grateful to the Governments of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the United Kingdom for funding the development of the NIM website as part of their support for VERTIC's national implementation project.

20 August 2007

VERTIC at the 2007 BWC Meeting of Experts

Rocio Escauriaza, Research Assistant at VERTIC, launched VERTIC's new national implementation website, in VERTIC's statement to the 2007 Meeting of Experts to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC).

In the paper, she outlined the key national implementation tools and reference materials available from the website.

VERTIC also featured in three papers submitted to the Meeting. As noted in the article below, the Governments of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the United Kingdom jointly submitted a paper, 'Building capacity to implement the biological and toxin weapons convention: Summary of a VERTIC project'. VERTIC's original survey of national legislation to implement the BWC and the subsequent evolution of VERTIC's to focus to the national implementation of treaties and norms prohibiting all weapons of mass destruction is summarized in the Implementation Support Unit's working paper, 'International and regional initiatives to enhance implementation of the Convention'. Switzerland acknowledged the research support of Angela Woodward, VERTIC's Acting Director and Dr Filippa Lentos, London School of Economics (LSE), for its working paper, 'National data collection processes'.