

Uruguay

No weapons of mass destruction (WMD), whether chemical, biological or nuclear, have been developed, produced or acquired by the country.

The characteristics of such weapons of mass destruction and their precursors require coordinated efforts and the adoption of measures by the aforesaid bodies, along with the adaptation of national laws to allow for the implementation of the treaties in force.

The institutions which are in some sense competent to implement controls on weapons of mass destruction are listed below. Others may be added depending on the specific nature of the issue under consideration:

- B. Ministry of Defence;
- C. Ministry of the Interior;
- D. Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- E. Ministry of Public Health;
- F. Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries;
- G. Ministry of Industry, Energy and Mining;
- H. Ministry of Economic and Financial Affairs;
- I. Central Bank (Information and Financial Analysis Unit);

A summary of the steps taken thus far within the ambits of the various national institutions, including the consolidation of existing norms at the national and international levels, is outlined below.

Reports of competent institutions

Ministry of Defence

The Ministry has designated a technical representative as a member of the Inter-ministerial Committee. It also has the capacity to mobilize the armed forces to participate, in accordance with their level of competency, in combating illicit trafficking in weapons of mass destruction and their effects, as referred to in Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

– Army

A chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear defence unit is being organized within the Army Corps of Engineers to carry out defence, protection and decontamination in the event of either terrorist acts using weapons of mass destruction, or serious chemical accidents, where the normal systems for responding to such emergencies may be overwhelmed.

In addition to institutional efforts, the successful completion of this project will require international assistance and cooperation in equipping and training personnel, which is already being directed by OPCW through its International Cooperation and Assistance Division.

– Navy

The Naval Prefecture provides security in the port areas under its jurisdiction.

– Air Force

Airport security is provided by branches of the Air Force, which perform aeronautical police functions.

– State Intelligence Office

Responsible for gathering information and developing intelligence on illicit trafficking in weapons of mass destruction and maintaining contact with similar organizations in other countries with a view to effective information exchanges to

combat this threat. Member of the Inter-ministerial Committee formed in response to resolution 1540 (2004).

C. Ministry of the Interior

– National Police

An arm of the judiciary and the highest law enforcement body; functions are carried out through its various branches.

– National Migration Office

Also responsible, under the authority of the Ministry of the Interior, for monitoring and recording the identity, entry, departure and residence of persons at the country's ingress/egress points. Exercises similar control over the unlawful entry of persons at unauthorized ingress points.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Participates in the diplomatic negotiating bodies dealing with such matters; is a member of the Interministerial Committee, where it provides advice on compliance with the various binding international instruments.

E. Ministry of Public Health

The Ministry of Public Health is the competent authority for the adoption of measures to monitor and carry out health policies, including control of the peaceful uses of micro-organisms and production of vaccines.

Basic Law No. 9,202 of 12 January 1934 provides that this Ministry shall exercise the following responsibilities in the area of health and hygiene:

- The adoption of any measures it deems necessary to maintain public health and their implementation by personnel under its orders, and the enactment of all regulations and provisions needed to that vital end;
- In the event of an epidemic or serious threat of an invasion of infectious and contagious diseases, the Ministry shall immediately adopt measures to keep the country safe or to mitigate the ravages of the infection. In such case, the executive branch shall order the security forces into action to ensure compliance with the measures decreed;
- Where necessary, it shall, through its technical offices, arrange for the isolation and detention of persons who by virtue of their health status could constitute a danger to the public;
- It shall implement food hygiene policies and look after and inspect the country's sanitation facilities and drinking water supply;
- The Ministry of Public Health shall always be consulted in connection with the conclusion of international treaties or agreements involving public health. Laws approving such treaties shall be endorsed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Public Health;
- The Ministry shall also enact regulatory measures to determine the health status of persons seeking to enter the country, whether or not they are immigrants.

8S/AC.44/2004/(02)/94

At the XVIth Meeting of Ministers of Health of MERCOSUR and Associated States, Agreement No. 05/04 established the Intergovernmental Commission on Risk Management and Vulnerability Reduction within the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), providing as follows:

- The Ministers of Public Health should ratify the priority nature of the issue and adopt the new concept of risk management;
- The new concept of integrated risk management was adopted for interventions in disaster situations;
- State party focal points were designated;

- It was recommended that the Commission should develop a common regional strategy, taking into account the quest for resources to ensure its sustainability;
- It was recommended that the Commission should utilize a multisectoral approach, especially in connection with natural and man-made (technological, chemical and biological) adverse events.

The XVIIth Meeting of Ministers of Health of MERCOSUR and Associated States, to be held in December 2004, will approve the basic strategic guidelines and timetable of activities of the Commission. These guidelines address inter-agency capacity-building in the health arena, exchanges of information, and coordination of actions at the regional level to cope with the impact of adverse events on member and associated States.

This intergovernmental initiative to coordinate mechanisms of prevention and response to public health threats is also a suitable mechanism which can be applied to the purposes provided for in binding international instruments on the prohibition of weapons of mass destruction.

F. Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries

The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries is the competent authority for the adoption of measures to monitor and carry out health policies at border crossings and control the peaceful uses of micro-organisms and production of animal and/or plant vaccines.

Certain regulations established for these controls are applicable to the purposes provided for in Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). For example:

- Act No. 16,082 of 18 October 1989, article 16, provides that the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries shall monitor the biosecurity of privately owned facilities producing foot-and-mouth vaccines in accordance with regulatory requirements. In the second phase of the control and eradication campaign, no individual may possess the foot-and-mouth virus;
- Decree No. 160 of 21 May 1997, article 8, prohibits the handling or possession of etiological agents of diseases not existing in the country, unless the laboratories have a biosecurity infrastructure that does not pose the risk of introducing exotic diseases. The Ministry's Department of Livestock Services shall grant the necessary authorizations to the laboratories;

9S/AC.44/2004/(02)/94

- Act No. 17,292 (Second Emergency Act), article 64, is an amendment to the Penal Code which deals with violation of health regulations. It provides that anyone who violates regulations designed to prevent the introduction of epidemic or contagious diseases capable of harming human or animal health shall be sentenced to 3 to 34 months' imprisonment. It also provides that serious injury to the national economy resulting from such an act shall be an aggravating factor in the offence.

Ministry of Economic and Financial Affairs

The Ministry of Economic and Financial Affairs, through the Customs Office, has authority over border controls to detect and prevent the illicit trafficking of weapons of mass destruction and their precursors.

Report of the Customs Office

(Domestic Customs regulations only specifically refer to nuclear/radioactive weapons)

Central Bank (Information and Financial Analysis Unit)

The Central Bank has an Information and Financial Analysis Unit which is mandated to adopt measures to combat the financial activities of international terrorism. The controls stipulated in Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) may be included among these measures.

Existing legal framework

In keeping with its principles of opposing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, solving conflicts by peaceful means and combating terrorism in all its forms, Uruguay has signed and ratified most of the existing regional and international instruments with those aims.

In addition, Uruguay is making efforts to incorporate the provisions of international law in its national legislation. The following are the most important instruments in this regard:

Biological Weapons Convention

Approved by Act No. 15,101 of 24 December 1980.

Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction

In force since 26 March 1975 (Act No. 15,101).

Exchange of instruments of ratification on 6 April 1981