

20 June 2016

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft,
President of the 70th Session of the General Assembly,
at the opening of the formal open consultations on the 2016
Comprehensive Review of the implementation of the resolution 1540
(2004)**

Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Spain, His Excellency Mr. Ignacio Ybáñez Rubio, Excellencies, Ambassador Oyarzun Marchesi, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, good morning to you all.

At the outset, I would like to thank Ambassador Oyarzun Marchesi for convening these consultations and for the devoted leadership that his country has shown as Chair of UN Security Council 1540 Committee.

Resolution 1540 is an important tool in global non-proliferation efforts and it's relevance remains as strong today as it was in 2004.

Indeed, the recent increase in acts of terrorism and violent extremism featured strongly during last month's High-Level Thematic Debate on Peace and Security, where member states discussed the changes needed to make the UN more relevant, more credible, more legitimate and more capable in response to today's global threats.

Around the world, terrorist acts are already causing great damage and suffering.

The prospect of terrorists gaining access to nuclear weapons or dangerous chemical or biological substances, however, is even more worrying.

We must not underestimate the risk of this occurring, particularly given that in some cases, those actors have managed to seize considerable military and financial means, or take control over territories, thus improving their chances of accessing facilities related to weapons of mass destruction.

For the last 12 years, resolution 1540 has guided us successfully in addressing this challenge.

In the global non-proliferation architecture it fills some important legal gaps between the main treaties related to disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and helps to facilitate the exchange of information and assistance among states.

It is important that countries continue to build their legal frameworks and adopt effective measures to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery means, including by non-state actors.

The adopted laws, however, must also be enforced and governments must be able to lean on effective national export control systems as well as trained and qualified, experts.

I was pleased to learn that since the adoption of this resolution, many countries have recognized this necessity as well as the importance of national action and international cooperation in this area.

The fact that more than 90 per cent of United Nations Member states have reported on the measures that they have undertaken to implement the resolution also deserves our acknowledgment.

Now, however, is time to take stock of these and other efforts over the past decade.

The comprehensive review to be concluded by December 2016 is an opportunity to analyse and evaluate implementation, to identify best practices and gaps and, based on that, to determine what further action is needed to achieve full and universal implementation of Resolution 1540.

Together we can find more effective ways to help member states in building and training capacities for prevention, particularly in today's rapidly changing scientific, technological and commercial environment.

In a context where emerging actors including in the private sector now have access to sensitive weapons technologies and operate in dual-use industries, it is critical that due attention is given to partnerships and cross-sectoral engagement including with research, industry, academia, parliamentarians, civil society and other relevant stakeholders.

We must raise their awareness of the dangers and capitalize on their expertise.

Regional organizations also have an important role to play in helping to coordinate the implementation of 1540 thanks to their deeper understanding of cultural and institutional specificities of the regions.

Of course, Resolution 1540 has a global mandate, backed up by Chapter VII obligations, pursuant to the Charter of the United Nations.

I commend the fact that the Committee does not only rely on these measures to achieve its objectives.

Instead, it engages in dialogue with Member States and has incrementally built an international climate of non-proliferation through cooperation.

I encourage you all, therefore, to use the opportunity presented by this comprehensive review, to re-commit to full and effective implementation of resolution 1540 at the national, regional and international levels and to improve this tool.

Your discussions will also support those taking place in the form of the Global Counter-Terrorism Review, all of which contributes to the purposes for which this Organization was formed some 70 years ago.

I wish you all the best in your endeavours.

Thank you.