

**OPENING REMARKS TO THE SIDE EVENT ON CHALLENGES FOR THE GOVERNANCE OF SYNTHETIC BIOLOGY AND IMPLICATIONS FOR UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1540 (2004)**

**Delivered by H.E. Sacha Sergio Llorentty Solíz, 1540 Committee Chair, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Plurinational State of Bolivia to the United Nations**

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the 1540 Committee, I welcome you to this side event on challenges for the governance of synthetic biology and the implications for implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1540. May I also take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the Government of Sweden, the Group of Experts supporting the 1540 Committee and the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs for their support for this event, including the participation of our guest speakers.

Globalization, rapid advances in science and technology, and the continuously evolving trading environment bring great benefits – but also new risks, including in respect of terrorism and also to proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, which need to be countered by the modification of existing measures or by the introduction of new ones.

In that context, resolution 1540 (2004) is a vital element in the global non-proliferation architecture to keep nuclear, chemical and biological weapons out of the hands of non-State actors. One of the key obligations under resolution 1540 (2004) is for States to adopt and enforce appropriate and effective laws to prohibit any non-State actor from manufacturing, acquiring, possessing, developing, transporting, transferring or using nuclear, chemical or biological weapons, in particular for terrorist purposes, as well as attempts to engage in any such activities, to participate in them as an accomplice or to assist or finance them. The resolution should also be considered as a starting point for co-operation to ensure that States have appropriate and effective domestic controls and export control measures in place. We should not forget that without a common base it would be impossible to address the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction at a global level. If effectively implemented universally, resolution 1540 (2004) is key to preventing the humanitarian, political, economic and environmental catastrophe that would result from the use of these weapons by non-State actors.

In December 2016, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2325 (2016), which is informed by the outcomes of the 2016 Comprehensive Review of the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) over the previous five years. In this resolution, the Security Council reinforced UN Member States' obligations under resolution 1540 (2004) and called upon them to take into account developments in the evolving nature of the risk of proliferation, and the rapid advances in science and technology, in their implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). These advances hold potential benefits for humanity but also pose new risks, including with respect to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors, which may require States to adapt existing measures or to introduce new ones. We therefore look forward to hearing from our speakers about the positive benefits of advances in science and technology, including synthetic biology which is our particular focus today, while exploring the challenges these advances may pose to States' implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

Thank you for your attention.