



**Open Consultations on the Comprehensive Review of the  
Status of Implementation of Resolution 1540 (2004)**

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22 June 2016  
New York

Ambassador Marchesi, chairman of the 1540 committee  
Excellencies  
Distinguished delegates  
Ladies and Gentlemen

I am pleased to provide closing remarks to your very fruitful and successful consultations.

The past three days have seen useful conversations about implementation efforts and lessons learned. Regional organisations, civil society, academia and industry have offered their insights.

After twelve years, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) has become – in the words of the Secretary-General – an important component of the global security architecture.

From the beginning, it was well understood that implementation of 1540 would be a long-term task requiring ongoing adaptation at the national, regional and international levels.

The 2016 Comprehensive Review gives us an opportunity to evaluate whether the current mandate, means of operation and support structures are fit for purpose in *today's* context.

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen

The context in 2016 is dramatically different from that of 2004. This is especially true of developments in science and technology, the evolution of the conduct of trade, and the modus operandi of terrorist groups and their sympathisers.

Resolution 1540 is a prevention mechanism. We have come a long way since 2004. But there is still more we can and should do. In this changing security environment, several gaps in the regime have been exposed. I want to highlight three of these.

First: the increasing urgency of the threat and risks. As the chairman said, it is not a matter of “if” an attack is going to happen, but “when”.

The investment made to date in prevention and response does not match the magnitude of the threat and risks posed by non-state actors and various types of Weapons of Mass Destruction, or “WMD”.

The consequences and impact of a biological attack on civilian population would be far greater than that of a radiological or chemical attack. But the investment made for the international architecture on these three types of WMD is the reverse of the possible impact.

On biological, we have witnessed in recent years, diseases like Ebola can pose threats to international peace and security. The impact could be magnified many times over if used intentionally for malicious purposes.

We are seeing increased reports of attempts by terrorist groups to produce or obtain biological agents and pathogens.

But across the non-proliferation architecture there is a gap in institutionalised mechanism to respond to these reports and allegations.

On radiological, the detonation of a so-called ‘dirty bomb’ by non-state actors would create widespread panic and fear. Yet there is no explicit reference to radiological threats or risks in resolution 1540.

The second issue is the disparity between the growing needs of 1540 implementation, including capacity building, and financing. Needs are growing fast while financing remains stagnant, so the gap is widening.

Third, we need to keep pace with rapidly evolving technological advances.

Technological advances have made means of production and methods of delivery for chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear, “CBRN”, materials cheaper, easier and more accessible for non-state actors.

For example, 3D printing is now reaching a point where it can produce proliferation sensitive materials such as chemical reactors or maraging steel for centrifuges. Intangible technology transfers, such as the availability of on-line research into pathogens or lab design, also increases risks.

Our increasingly networked society has made critical facilities containing chemical, biological or nuclear materials vulnerable to cyber-attacks by non-state actors.

Ladies and Gentlemen

In order to fill these gaps, I would like to make the following three points for further consideration by the Committee.

First, the Committee may wish to consider whether and how to update and strengthen the substance of resolution 1540.

On biological threats and risks, the Committee is uniquely placed. It could use its expertise and networks to follow up on allegations and information related to attempts by non-state actors to acquire or use biological agents. The Group of Experts in coordination with the Secretariat could solicit and collate information from Member States to pass to the 1540 Committee for assessment.

On the issue of radiological threats and risks, I note that the preamble of resolution 1540 recognises radioactive material as a sensitive material in need of effective accounting and security measures. This recognition can be made more explicit in the resolution’s operative paragraphs. The relative accessibility and insecurity of radiological sources is of rising concern when it comes to non-state actors.

Second, the Comprehensive Review provides Member States with a platform to fill the growing financing gap, including through the 1540 trust fund.

There is also a need to better align the skill sets of experts and Secretariat staff with evolving risks and threats.

The Secretary-General will do his best to recruit the best-qualified experts for the tasks at hand.

We in the Secretariat will also do our best to improve coordination with the Committee, the Group of Experts, and all other relevant stakeholders within the UN system.

Third, the Comprehensive Review is an opportunity to think through the implications of emerging technology on resolution 1540 and the non-proliferation architecture more broadly.

The Secretariat is at the disposal of Member States. The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research can assist in mapping out the threats, risks and potential remedies.

Ladies and Gentlemen

In closing, I want to raise two longer-term tasks related to non-state actors and WMD.

The first is that the international community needs to think harder about how to improve our preparedness in the event that prevention fails.

The need for preparedness is all the greater in the biological area as there is no dedicated institutional architecture.

States parties to the Biological Weapons Convention should also use their Review Conference in November to step up their thinking about how the BWC can help prevent, enhance preparedness, and respond to a biological attack.

If prevention fails, the international community will turn to the Security Council to guide the response.

The second issue is the need for accelerated action in disarmament and non-proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction. We have lived in the shadow of these most inhumane weapons for too long. As the Secretary-General said, the best way to reduce the risk of a non-state actor using a WMD is through their complete and irreversible elimination.

There is an obvious correlation between CBRN material reduction and risk of use reduction. The less CBRN material we have, the less the risk of it being used for destructive purposes.

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen

I count on the Council Members to make use of this Comprehensive Review process from now until December, to take it to a higher level – one where it is dynamic enough to address the existing and emerging threats and risks posed by the nexus between WMD and non-state actors.

As ever, UNODA stands ready to continue to fully support the work of the 1540 Committee and work with Member States and relevant stakeholders.