

Information Note¹

- Event:** Malawi National Awareness Raising Workshop on the Risks Related to Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Materials
- Organizer:** Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Malawi and United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)
- Date and Venue:** 29-30 April 2025, Lilongwe, Republic of Malawi
- Participants:** Over 50 representatives from 23 different ministries of the Malawi government with responsibilities associated with addressing CBRN risks (see attachment). Additionally, representatives from three academic institutions participated along with representatives from UNODA Biological Weapons Convention Implementation Support Unit, the European Union CBRN Centres of Excellence Initiative and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI). Other international organizations included the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). Regional organizations included the African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCONE) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA).

Background:

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Malawi invited the 1540 Committee to nominate a member of its Group of Experts to participate in a Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) awareness workshop and deliver presentations on the objectives and obligations of resolution 1540 (2004). The workshop was hosted by the Republic of Malawi in partnership with UNODA, the European Union CBRN Centers of Excellence Initiative and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute.

The objective of the workshop was to raise awareness among national stakeholders of CBRN risks regionally and globally and assess the status of the implementation of the related instruments in Malawi. The expected result was a renewed commitment among national stakeholders to the implementation of the instruments and the related CBRN National Action Plan including an updated resolution 1540 voluntary National Implementation Action Plan (vNAP).

¹ For information – not an official report. The views expressed here do not necessarily represent those of the 1540 Committee or of the organizers or participants in the event.

This workshop was of direct relevance to the 1540 Committee regarding the following operative paragraphs (OPs) of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 2663 (2022):

Resolution 1540 (2004):

- OP 8(a): To promote the universal adoption and full implementation, and, where necessary, strengthening of multilateral treaties to which they are parties, whose aim is to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, biological or chemical weapons;
- OP 8(b): To adopt national rules and regulations, where it has not yet been done, to ensure compliance with their commitments under the key multilateral non-proliferation treaties;
- OP 8(c): To renew and fulfil their commitment to multilateral cooperation, in particular within the framework of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, as important means of pursuing and achieving their common objectives in the area of non-proliferation and of promoting international cooperation for peaceful purposes;

Resolution 2663 (2022):

- OP 1: Reiterates its decisions in and the requirements of resolution 1540 (2004), and re-emphasizes the importance for all States to implement fully that resolution;
- OP 8: Encourages States to prepare on a voluntary basis national implementation action plans, with the assistance of the 1540 Committee and its expertise as appropriate, mapping out their priorities and plans for implementing the key provisions of resolution 1540 (2004), and to submit these plans to the 1540 Committee;
- OP 9: Encourages the 1540 Committee, with the support of relevant expertise, to continue to actively engage in dialogue with Member States on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), including through visits to States at their invitation;
- OP 10: Stresses the importance of a tailored dialogue and engagement of the 1540 Committee with Member States that recognizes specificity of States with regard to implementation and reporting, as well as to improve the development of customized assistance for effective implementation of resolution 1540 (2004);
- OP 25: Requests the 1540 Committee to continue to organize and participate in outreach events on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) at the international, regional, subregional, and as appropriate national level...

Highlights:

The workshop was attended by participants from 23 different Malawi government entities responsible for implementing legislation and measures associated with addressing CBRN risks,

as well as representatives from Malawi academia. The programme included overviews and identification of priorities across all thematic areas of CBRN, which included open discussion and clarification of technical issues.

Three Malawi national work plans associated with addressing CBRN risks were reviewed; the resolution 1540 voluntary National Implementation Action Plan (vNAP), the CBRN National Action Plan, and the Malawi Integrated Nuclear Security Sustainability Plan (INSSP). The objective of the work plan review was to raise national participants' awareness of each one, assess the status of implementation of related actions, identify priority areas for focus, and avoid duplication of efforts as much as possible. The 1540 Committee Expert provided a presentation on the objectives and obligations of resolution 1540 (2004) and participated in the open discussion associated with implementation of the associated work plans. The intended next step will be for Malawi to review and update each of the work plans taking account of completed actions and identifying current national priorities.

Additional comments

For further information, please contact the 1540 Committee experts by e-mail at 1540experts@un.org

Attachment: Malawi Participants