

UNITED NATIONS



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THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**REMARKS TO THE OPEN FORMAL CONSULTATION
FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION
1540 (2004)
New York, 21 June 2016**

Your Excellency Ambassador Román Oyarzun Marchesi [P.R. Spain and Chair of the 1540 Committee],
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen

Throughout my tenure as Secretary-General, Security Council resolution 1540 has been an important tool to prevent non-state actors from acquiring weapons of mass destruction. For twelve years, it has functioned as a fine example of international cooperation.

The alliances forged between the Committee and regional and sub-regional organisations such as the Organisation of American States, the European Union, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the League of Arab States and the African Union, have greatly benefitted the states of those regions, and the world as a whole.

Likewise, I applaud the Committee for the partnerships it has established with civil society, academia and the private sector. A collective approach is critical for a robust and adaptable resolution.

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to those Member States that have provided funds or in-kind assistance, including to the Office of the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and its regional centres, to support implementation of the resolution since 2004.

However, we must all acknowledge that the world has changed since 2004. Sadly, this has not always been for the better.

The use of poison gas in the Syrian Arab Republic was an alarming reminder of the continuing threat of weapons of mass destruction, or WMD.

Dangerous non-state actors have demonstrated global reach. They have actively sought the full range of WMD capabilities. They often operate on the territory of states that unfortunately lack the capacity to address these dangerous activities.

These non-state actors take advantage of the open borders and technologies that define the modern world and our global society. They seek to misuse the broad diffusion of technology, for their own evil ends.

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

The comprehensive review process mandated by resolution 1977 is an opportunity to make sure resolution 1540 is sharpened so that it can continue to be fit for purpose in this dynamic environment.

I am concerned about the increasing danger of malicious use by terrorists of Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear, or CBRN, material against a population centre. I believe resolution 1540 should and can play a greater role in ensuring the international community has the appropriate mechanisms to prevent such an incident, by enhancing CBRN security.

Member States also need to endow resolution 1540 with the means to guard against the misuse of technological advances. Resolution 1540 needs to be adaptable if it is to continue protecting us against easier, cheaper and more accessible means of production, and methods of delivery.

Narrowing these gaps in the 1540 regime clearly requires the universal and full implementation of resolution 1540.

I urge all Member States to make sure they are properly equipped to prevent non-state actors from acquiring weapons of mass destruction. Our collective security depends on this.

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen

Resolution 1540 has become an important component of the global security architecture. It is a pillar of the UN strategy to confront the global challenge of non-state actors acquiring weapons of mass destruction. It must be strengthened to keep up with the times.

We have made good progress in prevention, but we must also think about what to do if, despite all our efforts, prevention fails.

I urge members of the Security Council to take responsibility for improving our preparedness in response to the possible use of a WMD by a non-state actor.

Finally, I would like to stress that the best way to prevent non-state actors from using WMD is by eliminating all such weapons, completely and irreversibly.

I count on the international community to urgently step up its efforts on disarmament and non-proliferation of all kinds of weapons of mass destruction.

Let us redouble our efforts to create a safer and more secure world.

I wish you fruitful deliberations.

Thank you.