

**Statement by the Chair of the 1540 Committee,
Ambassador Oh Joon, at the Open Briefing to Member
States**

28 February 2014

I am pleased to welcome you to this Open Briefing of the 1540 Committee. I am particularly glad that Mr. Kuni Mikuriya, the Secretary-General of the World Customs Organisation, has joined us today to kick start the beginning of a series of events to commemorate the 10th anniversary of resolution 1540 this year.

Before I hand over the floor to Mr. Mikuriya, allow me to give a brief update on the priorities of the Committee and its activities for 2014.

Significance of resolution 1540 (2004)

By unanimously adopting resolution 1540 in 2004, the UN Security Council addressed the threat that non-State actors, including terrorists, may acquire, develop, traffic in or use nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery. It places obligations on all States to counter this threat. As Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon mentioned, resolution 1540 is a landmark resolution to

curb the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their means of delivery.

It not only complements existing non-proliferation treaties and arrangements but also has resulted in the great majority of States strengthening controls over WMD-related materials, equipment and technology.

As acknowledged by the Security Council, the full implementation of these obligations remains a challenge and a long-term task. It requires continuous efforts at national, regional and international levels. The 1540 Committee is encouraged by the many different ways Member States have supported this cause. These include providing direct financial contributions, hosting events, and sharing expertise with others to help build capacity for full implementation. I ask all Member States to continue to explore possibilities in meeting this challenge.

Most relevant in this regard is certainly the activities to provide assistance to States. When adopting the resolution in 2004, the Security Council recognised that some States would require assistance in seeking full implementation of the resolution. Consequently, a cooperative assistance mechanism was established. The

Security Council has over the years strengthened and expanded these tasks of the Committee in its role as a central clearinghouse to match-make assistance requests and offers.

Recent activities

In order to provide a brief update on the activities of the Committee, I would like to draw your attention to the 2013 Annual Review. This review provides a detailed report on the activities of the Committee in its four main areas of work which are: (1) monitoring and national implementation; (2) assistance; (3) cooperation with international, regional and sub-regional organizations; and (4) transparency and outreach.

Let me highlight some achievements so far:

- 171 out of the 193 Member States have submitted their national implementation reports, bringing us closer to universal reporting. In addition, States are beginning to report their voluntary National Implementation Action Plans, which map out priorities and plans for further implementing resolution 1540.
- The Committee and its experts conducted nine

country visits to Albania, Burkina Faso, Grenada, Madagascar, Niger, the Republic of Congo, the Republic of Korea, Trinidad and Tobago and the USA.

- We have also started to work on a compilation of effective practices that could be used by States on a voluntary basis to implement the resolution. I have forwarded a request to all Member States as well as to international and regional organizations to submit such practices.
- The Committee's outreach included participation in over 90 events last year, engaging not only governments but also civil society, private industry and academia.

Priorities

Building on the progress of last year, I would like to identify some key priorities of the Committee for 2014.

- First, I look forward to the full support of Member States to achieve universal reporting. We are getting close to it, but it will require upgraded efforts to encourage the remaining 20 odd states.

- Second, the Committee will explore ways to further enhance the Committee's role as assistance facilitator to better respond to the calls of Member States.
- Finally, the Committee will heed the recommendations that were agreed in the recent Annual Review. These include the sharing of effective practices, developing a "living network" of points of contact, promoting synergy with other counter-terrorism and non-proliferation bodies, and interacting with civil society and private sectors as well as with parliamentarians.

In commemoration of the 10th anniversary landmark, I intend to lead a special Security Council open debate on May 7th with the aim to adopt a Presidential Statement in support of this resolution when I serve as the President of the Security Council in May.

WCO

Let me now say a few words about the significance of the World Customs Organization whose Secretary General has so kindly agreed to provide a keynote address today. The contribution of national customs services in non-

proliferation cannot be overstated. It has been noted quite rightly that resolution 1540 with its focus on the need to develop and to maintain appropriate border, export, transit or trans-shipment controls, has placed customs administrations “*at the centre of the international debate on how to best deal with the non-proliferation of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons*”¹.

With its representation from 179 Customs administrations across the globe that collectively process approximately 98 per cent of world trade, the WCO is an indispensable partner of the 1540 Committee with regard to the implementation of border and export control-related obligations contained in resolution 1540.

The 1540 Committee has often noted how efforts of the WCO contribute to and complement the objectives of resolution 1540 and how the WCO has integrated the objectives of resolution 1540 into its assistance efforts. It is therefore noteworthy that the WCO launched the Strategic Trade Controls Enforcement Project.

Acknowledging the complementary nature of the

¹From Will Robinson: “*New Border and Customs Controls for Implementing UNSCR 1540*” (pg. 136-152), Pg. 136, in: Olivia Bosch and Peter van Ham: *Global Non-Proliferation and Counter-Terrorism. The Impact of UNSCR 1540*”, Brookings / Chatham House / Clingendael, Baltimore/London/The Hague, 2007.

objectives of the WCO and the 1540 Committee, the 1540 Committee and the WCO have established a long-lasting partnership with the clear objective to advance further in the areas of mutual interest.

Apart from meetings between the Secretary General of the WCO and the Chair of the 1540 Committee, there have been very productive consultations at the operational level between the WCO and the 1540 Group of Experts. Let me assure you, Mr Secretary General, that we will continue and further intensify this dialogue.

Let me now hand over the floor to the Coordinator of the Group of Experts who will provide an overview of the Committee's cooperation with relevant international organizations.

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