

AFRICAN UNION

الاتحاد الأفريقي



UNION AFRICAINE

UNIÃO AFRICANA

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, P.O. Box: 3243 Tel.: (251-11) 5513 822 Fax: (251-11) 5519 321

Email: situationroom@africa-union.org

PRESS RELEASE

THE AU REITERATES ITS COMMITMENT TO WORK TOWARDS THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1540 (2004) IN AFRICA

Addis Ababa, 30 April 2014: This week marks the 10th anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1540 (2004) by the United Nations (UN) Security Council. The resolution aims to prevent non-State actors and terrorists from acquiring, proliferating and using nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery. It requires Member States to refrain from providing support to non-state actors; enact legislation establishing prohibitions; as well as implement domestic controls over such materials to prevent unauthorized use and trafficking.

The Chairperson of the Commission, Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, wishes to recall that, within the framework of the Common African Defense and Security Policy adopted by the 2nd Extraordinary Session of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government, held in Sirte, in February 2004, the AU has long been committed to regional and global efforts to prevent and combat terrorism as well the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. She stresses that the evolving threat of terrorism on the continent and the terrorists' determination to inflict wanton destruction through all means possible require continued efforts by the Member States, individually and collectively, to protect the continent and its people against such threats.

In recognition of this, the 20th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union, held in Addis Ababa, from 27 to 28 January 2013, reiterated the relevance of resolution 1540 (2004) and requested the Commission, in collaboration with the Security Council Committee established pursuant to the resolution (1540 Committee), as well as the regional and international organizations and partners, to support Member States in their efforts to implement the resolution. Subsequently, the Commission, in collaboration with the 1540 Committee and with the support of the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), organized a sensitization and capacity building workshop in December 2013 for African states on the implementation of resolution 1540. The Commission will continue to work with the relevant regional and international partners to ensure the effective implementation of the resolution on the continent.

In another positive development, the Chairperson of the Commission notes with satisfaction the entry into force, on 26 February 2014, of the AU Protocol on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, which was adopted in July 2004. The Protocol, which supplements the 1999 Algiers Convention on the Prevention and Combatting of Terrorism, recognizes the growing linkages between terrorism and the threat of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, trafficking, transnational organized crime and money laundering. The Protocol thus obligates States Parties to strengthen national and regional measures in conformity with relevant continental and international instruments, to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction. The Protocol also calls on Member States to cooperate with the international community in the implementation of continental and international instruments relating to disarmament and non-proliferation.

Since its adoption, resolution 1540 (2004) has become an important component of the global security architecture. The Commission's efforts in promoting its effective implementation further seek to ensure that it is also an instrument for realizing and enhancing regional and international cooperation in law enforcement and the peaceful application of nuclear, chemical and biological science and technology for the development of the continent.

The Chairperson of the Commission seizes this opportunity to call on Member States to renew their efforts to prevent and combat terrorism as well the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. She reiterates the Commission's commitment to provide the necessary assistance and support to Member States in meeting their obligations pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004).