

**VIDEO MESSAGE TO THE PARLIAMENTARIANS FOR GLOBAL ACTION (PGA)
REGIONAL AFRICA PARLIAMENTARY WORKSHOP TO PROMOTE
UNIVERSALITY AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BIOLOGICAL AND TOXIN
WEAPONS CONVENTION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF UNITED NATIONS
SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1540 (2004)**

Honourable Chairperson,
Members of Parliament,
Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Committee established pursuant to UN Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), I would like to express our appreciation to the President of the Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA), the Hon. Margareta Cederfelt, MP, for the kind invitation to address this regional workshop for African Members of Parliament. Regrettably, due to other pressing commitments, I am unable to be with you in Dar-es-Salaam today.

We appreciate the opportunity to address this Workshop on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) and its continued importance and relevance in curbing the threat posed by the proliferation of biological, chemical and nuclear weapons, as well as their means of delivery to and by non-State actors, including terrorists.

Let me, at the outset, commend the PGA for its role in promoting the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). This resolution remains a vital and integral component of the global non-proliferation architecture, filling important gaps in relation to the scope of existing international instruments, inasmuch as it concerns non-State actors, and requires States to maintain or adopt effective controls over materials related to nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their delivery systems.

One of the key obligations under resolution 1540 (2004) is for States to adopt and enforce appropriate and effective laws to prohibit any non-State actor from manufacturing, acquiring, possessing, developing, transporting, transferring or using nuclear, chemical or biological weapons, in particular for terrorist purposes, as well as attempts to engage in any such activities, to participate in them as accomplice or to assist or finance them. The adoption of such appropriate and effective laws is particularly relevant to the mandate of Members of Parliament.

As you are aware, the potential effects of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons proliferation to and by non-State actors, particularly their use for terrorist acts, could have catastrophic humanitarian, economic and environmental consequences. Regrettably, the recently reported use of chemical weapons by non-State actors in some parts of the world and the continued prevalence of illicit trafficking and other unauthorized activities and events involving nuclear, chemical and biological weapons related materials outside of regulatory control, illustrate that this is not merely a theoretical possibility. In addition, globalization, rapid advances in science and new emerging technologies have brought about increased opportunities for socio-economic development, but have also led to additional complexities and risks, including with respect to non-State actor access to technologies that can be used for both legitimate and proliferation purposes.

Given the global nature of these challenges, no State, irrespective of its geographical location or level of development, can argue that it is somehow insulated from such threats and that it consequently has no need to adopt appropriate and effective measures. Effective domestic, border and export controls over nuclear, chemical and biological weapons related materials are not only a security imperative, but can also establish the necessary trust between States to facilitate and further enhance legitimate trade.

National authorities cannot achieve non-proliferation objectives by acting alone and close co-operation between States, and co-ordination with relevant international, regional and sub-regional organisations is required, as recognized in UN Security Council resolution 2325 (2016). Effective implementation also requires active engagement between the State and relevant national actors, including industry, academia and professional associations. This is an area where Members of Parliament have an important role to play, particularly in raising awareness of the threat posed by the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons to and by non-State actors and building partnerships with all relevant actors at a national level.

Since its adoption in 2004, significant progress has been made towards the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), including on the African Continent. However, much remains to be done and some States continue to require assistance in the implementation of their obligations. While the UN Security Council in resolution 2325 (2016) recognises that the full and effective implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) is a long-term task that will require continuous efforts, it again calls upon States that have not yet presented a first report, to submit such a report without delay. It is my hope that Members of Parliament of the remaining 12 non-reporting States will encourage the submission of the outstanding reports.

While there is no “one-size fits all” solution to effective implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) given the unique circumstances prevailing in each State, much can be achieved through the sharing of experiences. I therefore encourage Members of Parliament to use the discussions this week to exchange views and to share experiences in their national implementation efforts.

The 1540 Committee, with the support of its Group of Experts, remain ready to cooperate with and, upon request, facilitate assistance to States with their 1540 implementation efforts which would contribute to achieving our common objective of preventing the catastrophic use of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons by non-State actors.

I thank you.