

Statement by Ambassador Jose Javier De La Gasca

Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004)

4th Annual Disarmament & International Security Affairs Fellowship

New Delhi, 29 January 2024

Excellencies, distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to start by expressing, on behalf of the Members of the 1540 Committee, our gratitude to the Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service (SSIFS) and the Disarmament and International Security Affairs Division of the Ministry of External Affairs of India for its invitation to make an intervention in the 4th Annual Disarmament and International Security Affairs Fellowship.

For the 1540 Committee, this event constitutes an exceptional opportunity to meet with around 30 young diplomats from a range of countries cutting across geographies and promote the aim of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004).

The unanimous adoption of resolution 1540 in 2004 was an important and timely measure in international efforts aimed at preventing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery to non-state actors. As you are aware, Resolution 1540 aims to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including by preventing non-state actors from developing, acquiring, manufacturing, possessing, transporting, transferring or using nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery. The resolution is the first international instrument that deals with weapons of mass destruction, their means of delivery and related materials in an integrated and comprehensive manner.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that resolution 1540 does not conflict with or alter rights and obligations of State Parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention or alter the responsibilities of the International Atomic Energy Agency or the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. It establishes additional

obligations in order to address existing lacunae in current international instruments. Every State should also be assured that full implementation of the resolution by States does not hamper international cooperation in trading with materials, equipment and technology destined for peaceful purposes.

What I would like to stress is that measures to counter proliferation remain primarily within the responsibility of States and ultimately the implementation of resolution 1540 is a national function and responsibility. It is also important to raise the fact that the regime set up by resolution 1540 definitely does not concern only to States that possess weapons of mass destruction, their means of delivery and related materials. The obligations concern to all States.

The threat posed by non-state actors, including those with terrorist purposes, acquiring and using weapons of mass destruction, does not recognize borders. Every single country and nation have to get involved in this global effort. That is what makes each and every country's national performance so crucial for achieving the goals set out by resolution 1540. The commitments of all the countries and their transposition into national legislation, norms and practice, in particular, is what could make a genuine difference in this regard.

Resolution 1540 Committee is engaged in various types of activities to promote full implementation of the resolution, sharing of experiences and lessons learned, and capacity building in the area covered by the resolution. The Committee seeks to promote implementation of the resolution through dialogue, outreach, assistance and cooperation. To this end, it uses several tools, such as the 1540 Committee matrix, an assistance template, participation in workshops and events related to the implementation of the resolution, and its website.

Resolution 1540 also recognizes that some States may require assistance in implementing provisions of the resolution. In order to strengthen Member States' capacity to implement their 1540 obligations, the Committee has streamlined its assistance matchmaking process and sought updated information from States and international and regional organisations offering assistance, as well as from those States seeking assistance. The cooperative approach and dialogue with Members States will continue to be the cornerstones of the activities of the Committee.

The Committee has conducted a comprehensive review of the implementation status of resolution 1540 in 2022. According to the review, progress has been made towards the implementation of resolution 1540 since the last review in 2016. However, full implementation of resolution 1540 remains a long-term task.

Finally, I would like to note that in April of this year we will celebrate the 20th anniversary of resolution 1540 (2004). Since its adoption, Resolution 1540 has become a vital component of the global nonproliferation architecture.

I wish you a fruitful continuation and achievement in your fellowship programme.

Thank you for your attention.