

Speaking notes for the Chair of the 1540 Committee
Resolution 1540 Civil Society Forum
11 April 2016

First of all, on behalf of the 1540 Committee, I must thank, through the Rector David Malone, the United Nations University (UNU) for their willingness and excellent efforts in hosting this event. Your support in making this a truly global event is very much appreciated.

I would like to add my words of welcome to those given already to the participants. Many of you have travelled long distances to join us for these two days of discussion. Your willingness to participate in this important event is much appreciated – and much needed. As you can tell from the agenda, the part of civil society we are engaging over these two days is academia. Your input to the comprehensive review of the implementation of resolution 1540 is essential. While academics have organised and participated in many of our events since 2004, an event dedicated to seeking the views of academia has been rare.

I am glad that the agenda reflects the several dimensions of academic engagement in implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), including:

- How the roles and responsibilities of educators, researchers, and scientists themselves in implementation of the obligations of resolution 1540 can best be defined, shaped, and improved;
- Your views about the best ways to help States implement the resolution;
- How implementation might be better evaluated and promoted by the 1540 Committee.

An important point I want to make at the outset is that the use of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons by non-State actors is not a hypothetical idea. The evolution of terrorist groups pursuing extremist ideas and extreme violence makes it clear that there are no boundaries in the scale and type of violence these groups might use.

No region of the world is immune from this threat whether being the subject of attack or being exploited to give support in various ways – material, financial or supplying recruits. Resolution 1540 is a preventive resolution. As I always say, investment in prevention is far

less expensive than the horrific human, financial and political costs that could result from the use of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons by non-State actors.

Another challenge to implementation, and where the help of academia is important, is evaluating the impact on effective implementation of the resolution of the rapid developments in science, technology and commerce. The world is very different today than just eleven years ago, on 28 April 2004, when the Security Council adopted the resolution. Advances in science technology and commerce bring important economic, social and humanitarian benefits and must not be unduly impeded. However, the risks arising from the misuse of these enhanced capabilities for malign purposes must be taken into account to maintain effective implementation of the resolution.

The 1540 Committee recently held a special session devoted to analysing the implications of the advances and it was clear that more awareness by governments and civil society is needed particularly in such areas as intangible technology transfers, novel commercial production capabilities, robotics, as well as methods of proliferation financing. These are all areas where academia could make a valuable input – not forgetting, of course there are implications for academia itself – particularly in the area of intangible technology transfers.

The agenda for our gathering has been structured to encourage a discussion of all these issues. I am grateful to those who have submitted papers, which will no doubt give impetus to our considerations. I very much hope that the outcome of the two days of discussions will provide a better understanding of:

- the scientific and technological developments that we should be most concerned about;
- the challenges faced by academia in the field of non-proliferation and the methods by which this can be promoted;
- ways that the 1540 Committee can enhance effective engagement with the academic sector with the aim of more effective implementation of the resolution.

I look forward to receiving the report of the conference, which will be an important contribution to the Committee's comprehensive review of the implementation of resolution 1540. Looking ahead there will be a consultation with Member States, international

organisations and civil society in New York from 20 to 22 June. The deliberations of this meeting will be an important input to this event.

Finally I must thank the governments of the Republic of Korea and the United States whose voluntary contributions made this event possible. Thanks go too to the Office for Disarmament Affairs for their necessary administrative support.

I look forward to lively and interesting discussions of over the next two days.

Thank you for your attention.

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