

International conference in support of implementing UN Security Council resolution 1540 (2004):

*Risks, Challenges and Responses:
Industry's Effective Practices in Responding to Biosecurity Risks*

3-4 December 2013, Wiesbaden, Germany

**Statement on behalf of Ambassador Oh Joon, Chair of the Security Council Committee
established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004)**

3 December 2013

Excellencies,

Distinguished participants,

On behalf of Ambassador Oh Joon of the Republic of Korea, the Chair of the 1540 Committee, I wish to thank the Government of Germany for the invitation extended to the Committee to participate in this Wiesbaden industry conference. This present conference builds on the success of the first industry conference on UN Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004), held last year in Wiesbaden, where over 20 international, regional and sub-regional industry associations participated, representing various sectors of nuclear, biological, chemical, transport, financing as well as aerospace industries. That conference was a successful first step in the process of engaging industry as a partner in international efforts to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery to non-State actors.

This year's "Wiesbaden conference" also represents a significant milestone in the refinement of outreach efforts, as requested by the Security Council, since it is focused on specific thematic issues related to implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), namely biosecurity (encompassing non-proliferation of biological weapons and their means of delivery as well as domestic controls over related materials). While there has been an encouraging increase in 2013 in the number of biosecurity events in which "1540 issues" have featured, there have been only two international workshops organised by States that were dedicated explicitly to the biosecurity aspects of resolution 1540 since its adoption in 2004.

This is the first conference since the adoption of the resolution that specifically draws on relevant expertise from the private sector (including industry) in support of its implementation by States to prevent the proliferation of biological weapons and their means of delivery to non-State actors, in particular for terrorist purposes.

The 1540 Committee is grateful for Germany's continued support and for initiating this "Wiesbaden process" as a forum for dialogue between the 1540 Committee and the private sector. I also wish to thank the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and the EU-Outreach in Export Control of Dual-Use Programme for their contributions.

I am honoured to represent the 1540 Committee here. The 1540 Committee is a subsidiary body of the United Nations Security Council. It was created in 2004 when the Security Council unanimously adopted its resolution 1540 (hence its name) for the purpose of monitoring its implementation. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) is a key international instrument and a significant milestone in the efforts of the international community to curb the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery to non-state actors. It aims to prevent such actors - in particular terrorists – from getting hold of, transferring or even using these weapons. To this end, the resolution places a number of obligations on all States.

In essence the principal obligations under resolution 1540 (2004) are:

- an obligation for States to refrain from providing any form of support to non-state actors that attempt to develop, acquire, manufacture, possess, transport, transfer or use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery;
- an obligation for States to adopt and enforce appropriate effective laws to prohibit and prosecute such activities by non-State actors; and,
- an obligation for States to establish domestic controls over materials, equipment and technology which could be used for the design, development, production or use of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

These key obligations will be explained in more detail later by the members of group of experts supporting the 1540 Committee.

I would just like to emphasise that, in adopting the resolution, the Security Council affirmed that the prevention of proliferation of nuclear, chemical and nuclear weapons should not hamper international cooperation and trade in materials, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes.

Resolution 1540 was further reaffirmed by resolution 1977 (2011), including by extending the mandate of the Security Council 1540 Committee to 2021. This was a clear affirmation of the international community's resolve to counter the threat of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-State actors, including those bent on carrying catastrophic attacks on our populations.

Global cooperation in countering nuclear, chemical and biological threats is a *sine qua non* in preventing WMD proliferation and terrorism as well as in ensuring the peaceful use of science and technology. We all know that outbreaks and epidemics don't need visas to cross borders. Naturally occurring pathogens can be engineered or released in such a way to make them more harmful and increase the human, agricultural, social and economic toll. Experience shows that terrorists, and other non-State actors with criminal intent, will exploit gaps and vulnerabilities to seek out technological expertise, financing, and materiel that they need for their nefarious activities. While weapons grade-plutonium or highly enriched uranium are hard to come by, biological agents are ubiquitous in nature and in clinical and research laboratories (just to name a few places) and the know-how to develop biological weapons is available to those who seek it, thanks to the advances in informatics and the internet. The inherent dual use nature of biotechnology and life sciences poses a particular challenge to mitigating such biological threats.

The implementation of the obligations under resolution 1540 (2004) is the responsibility of governments. How they implement them in domestic laws and regulations is up to them. However for effective implementation a concerted effort is required. Industry, academia, private sector and other non-governmental organizations are participants in this long term effort.

A State's ability to prevent WMD proliferation and terrorism on its territory is an important factor in promoting sustainable trade and investment opportunities. Through national reports and voluntary national implementation actions plans submitted to the 1540 Committee, States

demonstrate and detail their commitment to strengthening their individual and collective measures against weapons of mass destruction and terrorism. Biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries are their key partners in developing vaccines, therapeutics, diagnostics, and platform technologies targeting chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and naturally emerging threats. They can also be the first line of defense against those trying to illicitly procure or take possession of biological weapons-related materials or relevant equipment.

Resolution 1540 (2004) acknowledges the merits of a dialogue between States and the private sector. It specifically calls upon all States to develop appropriate ways to work with and inform industry and the public about their obligations under the laws that have been implemented in accordance with resolution 1540 (2004). Furthermore, in 2011, in its resolution 1977 and in the context of the mandate to identify effective implementation practices, the Security Council encouraged the 1540 Committee, at its discretion, to draw also on relevant expertise, of the private sector, with, as appropriate, their State's consent.

The "Wiesbaden process" initiated by the German government gives the 1540 Committee the valuable opportunity to interact with participants from the private sector. It is an opportunity to learn of the developments in research and development in laboratories in academia and industry - institutions with high relevance for resolution 1540 (2004) - around the world. It is about understanding effective security-related strategies or "effective practices" in this regard. It is also about discussing what measures States have adopted to work with or inform industry. Last but not least, this is also very much about fully appreciating the challenges that both States and the private sector face and how we can better work together and achieve sustainable public-private partnerships.

I look forward to hearing your views on how the dialogue between the private sector and the 1540 Committee can be further strengthened so that science and technology will be used exclusively for the benefit of mankind, to minimize the risk of biological materials being misused for prohibited purposes without inhibiting international trade and cooperation.

Thank you very much.

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