

**Workshop on Implementation of Resolution 1540 (2004)  
Pretoria, South Africa,  
21 and 22 November 2012**

**Presentation by Ambassador Baso Sangqu, Chairman of the 1540  
Committee**

Distinguished participants,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my honour to address you as the Chair of the 1540 Committee of the Security Council. As you are aware, the Committee follows closely the efforts of all States, including those in Africa, to implement their obligations under resolution 1540 (2004).

The Committee is quite aware however, that the considerable threat that still remains means that the Committee will continue to promote the implementation of the resolution, with a focus on the practical ways and means to assist States in meeting their obligations under the resolution. To this end, we have been able to engage with States and relevant international, regional and sub-regional organizations that are willing to provide assistance. The Committee also maintains a list of possible assistance providers on its website.

The Committee liaises with States and relevant international, regional and sub-regional organizations to promote the sharing of experience, lessons learned and effective practices. The Committee and its group of experts have also been working to identify effective practices, templates and guidance with a view to developing a compilation of these.

*Progress by African States in implementation of resolution 1540*

On 12 September 2011 the Committee adopted its report on implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) and has submitted it to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). According to this document, since 2008 more states have taken measures to implement almost every obligation or recommendation of the resolution.

At the end of 2011 reporting by States on the implementation of the resolution reached a high level - 168 States submitted at least one report and 105 States provided additional information, many of them more than once.

Taking a long term perspective, the commitment of African States to prevent non-State actors, including terrorists, from acquiring WMD-related materials are not in doubt. In 1999, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) adopted the Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism. The status of acceptance of legal obligations by African States with respect to international instruments on disarmament and non-proliferation is high, for example, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM), the Chemical

Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC). Through the Pelindaba Treaty, African States have established an African nuclear-weapon-free zone. The implementation of these instruments by all States of the region would contribute to meeting their obligations under resolution 1540 (2004) to prevent non-State actors from acquiring access to WMD, their means of delivery and related materials.

#### *Assistance for African States*

Though most African States do not export or produce materials that fall within the scope of resolution 1540 (2004), the risk is that African States could be used as points of transit and trans-shipment for non-State actors that seek to acquire materials related to weapons of mass destruction or their delivery systems. The obligations set up by resolution 1540 (2004) are binding on all States, regardless of their membership in multilateral agreements. This understanding has been evident from the interest expressed by several African States who have requested that the Committee, in its match-making role, provide assistance in locating expertise that could assist them in closing any gaps that they may have in their domestic controls.

We do not seek to push aside concerns regarding social, economic, environmental and health problems that stand before African States. We are aware that African States face particular challenges of their own, in addition to the obligations imposed by resolution 1540 (2004). In this spirit, resolution 1977 (2011), which provided for the ten year extension of the mandate of the 1540 Committee, takes into account the need for assistance by States. We are aware that approximately 20 African States have yet to submit their first report to the Committee. During the 2011-2012 period, the Committee has received submissions from Ethiopia, Gabon, Rwanda and the Republic of Congo.

The Committee and its experts are involved in constant dialogue on implementation of the requirements of resolution 1540 (2004) with the authorities of African States, including on assistance issues. Such dialogues take place in various outreach events as well as meetings in New York. Our representatives have participated in a number of workshops over the last 2 years in Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Egypt to raise awareness on the importance of the resolution and to better understand the needs and problems of African States with regard to the implementation of their obligations. As Chairman of the 1540 Committee, I briefed a September 2011 meeting of the Africa Group in New York on the work of the Committee, encouraging African States to continue to move forward on reporting and implementation of resolution 1540 and highlighting the availability of the Committee and its experts for any further dialogue.

As Chairperson of the 1540 Committee I participated in several meetings with providers of assistance, most recently at a meeting of the G8 Global Partnership Working Group Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of

Mass Destruction. I briefed them on 1540-related developments, and encouraged them to give all due consideration to the assistance requests from States relayed by the Committee and contribute to the development of capacities.

The Committee has continued its efforts to channel and facilitate assistance to African States by encouraging those who need help to specify their requests using the assistance template suggested by the Committee. Some requests have been received using the template, for example, from Madagascar while other States expressed their need for assistance through their recent reports or by correspondence, such as those from Benin, the Republic of the Congo, Kenya and Uganda.

In line with its mandate, the Committee has offered to conduct country visits at the invitation of States to discuss the challenges of implementation and requirements for assistance. A country-specific approach can be useful also to facilitate ongoing dialogue at the grassroots level of implementation. We have recently conducted a visit to the Republic of the Congo and Madagascar, at their invitation.

Under such circumstances the Committee sees its task in continuing its dialogue with African States and matching them with potential assistance partners. Though implementation of the resolution is a responsibility of States, assistance from the international community can play a major role in enhancing the capability of African States to meet their requirements. Assistance could be further localized and tailored to support more specific country needs, and provided through relevant international organizations, including technical competent bodies such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

#### *Interaction with regional and sub-regional bodies*

As a general approach, the Committee also works with international, regional and sub-regional organizations, to facilitate their Member States' implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). Such activities have already taken place with the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Organisations for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the Central American Integration System (SICA). In this regard, we welcomed the submission in August 2011, of the African Union Commission's (AUC) point of contact for resolution 1540 (2004).

Regional and sub-regional organizations are helpful in another way to provide forums at which their members can share their experiences and lessons learned. The role of the African Union would be indispensable in assisting States in the implementation of the resolution and we welcome further engagement on this issue. Other regional organizations like the European Union (EU) can be a source of assistance, as well as other interested parties.

Let me conclude by saying that the Committee considers Africa to be a very important region, and as a region that may require further assistance in the various national efforts on the implementation of the provisions of resolution 1540 (2004). We hope that our joint efforts will contribute to the implementation of the resolution by all States of the continent.

I thank you.