

**Meeting of  
International, Regional and Sub-regional Organizations on  
Cooperation in Promoting the Implementation of  
UN Security Council resolution 1540 (2004)**

**15-16 December 2010, Vienna, Austria**

**Opening Statement by**

**Ambassador Claude Heller  
Chairman of the UNSC 1540 Committee**

Mr Chairman, distinguished participants,

I would like to thank the Government of Austria for hosting this meeting and for cooperating with the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) in organizing it, with the participation of members of the 1540 Committee and its group of experts. The meeting will bring together in one forum so many international organizations, including United Nations bodies and regional and sub-regional organizations to focus on how to enhance their cooperation with the Committee in promoting the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540. We took note that 26 organizations have been invited to this event.

As you know, the Security Council, acting under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, affirmed in resolution 1540 that proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, as well as their means of delivery, constitutes a threat to international peace and security. The Council focused particular attention on the threat of terrorism and the risk that non-State actors may develop, acquire, manufacture or use nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery. The Council also expressed grave concern at the threat of illicit trafficking in such weapons, their means of delivery and related materials, which it recognized as adding a new dimension to the issue of proliferation and the threat it poses to international peace and security. Furthermore, the Council recognized the binding legal obligations and other commitments made by most states under existing

treaties, but it also called upon States, where necessary, to strengthen those instruments and renew their commitments to multilateral cooperation and to coordination of efforts at the national, sub-regional, regional and international levels.

The objectives of resolution 1540 are therefore well known to the participants and I will now focus my remarks directly on the theme of this meeting: how best to promote implementation of resolution 1540 with the cooperation of international, regional and sub-regional organizations.

It is important to note that the means for the 1540 Committee to promote implementation of the resolution is by dialogue and cooperation with States, consistent with their laws and with international law, and by cooperation with intergovernmental bodies to achieve common objectives. The value of enhanced cooperation with intergovernmental organizations was recognized at the outset in 2004, but it was after the experience of the initial years of implementation that the Security Council specifically encouraged the 1540 Committee to engage actively in building cooperative arrangements with them. Thus, the Security Council held an open thematic debate in February 2007 on how international organizations could cooperate on non-proliferation and the implementation of resolution 1540.

In April 2008 the Security Council adopted resolution 1810, whereby it requested the 1540 Committee "to provide opportunities for interaction with relevant international, regional and sub-regional organizations to promote implementation of resolution 1540". In more specific terms, the resolution encouraged the Committee to engage actively with those organizations "to promote the sharing of experiences and lessons learned in the areas covered by resolution 1540 (2004), and to liaise on the availability of programmes which might facilitate implementation...." In this context, the resolution elaborated the clearing house function of the Committee with respect to technical assistance for implementation, namely by facilitating the matching of requests and offers of assistance.

Further steps were proposed in October 2009, when the 1540 Committee carried out a Comprehensive Review of the status of implementation of resolution 1540. The final document calls upon the Committee "to create more formal and informal cooperative arrangements with international, regional and sub-regional and multilateral institutions, to facilitate the sharing of information on good practices and lessons learned, to develop and implement standards, and identify assistance requirements and programmes."

I would like to stress some points about organizational mandates, constraints and possibilities in the cooperation process. It is clear that the mandate under resolution 1540 is not intended to duplicate what exists under the mandates of other organizations and that the provisions are not to hamper international cooperation in materials equipment and technology for peaceful purposes. The respective mandates of intergovernmental organizations are fully respected by the Security Council. Therefore the main avenue of the cooperation between the 1540 Committee and intergovernmental organizations should be usage of their expert potential with the consent of organizations and full understanding of the commonality of tasks to be solved. The 1540 Committee recognizes that intergovernmental organizations, in accordance with their mandates, provide guidelines and standards and technical assistance programmes that States can implement in accordance with their national circumstances. Regional and sub-regional organizations can also play a politically supportive role by bringing to the attention of their member States the urgency of implementation of resolution 1540 in that context.

In sharing information and experiences, all organizations seek to promote cooperation and transparency while applying their confidentiality rules on the exchange of information with outside bodies, especially on information provided to them by their member States with restrictions on distribution. In the areas where they share common objectives, it is necessary to explore ways to resolve some of the obstacles to exchange of information where some flexibility exists. Resource constraints can also be addressed through cooperative efforts or coordination, especially with respect to technical assistance to member States where the 1540 Committee does not have its own resources but seeks to facilitate the process through its clearinghouse function.

There have been some achievements already in the cooperation between the 1540 Committee and many organizations. Some organizations have adopted resolutions of support to the efforts of the Committee, and this effort has helped in promoting greater understanding and acceptance of its mandate by member States. The vast majority of member States have now provided at least one report to the Committee on the status of implementing the resolution. Reciprocal representation at relevant meetings and workshops has also helped in explaining to national officials the complementarity of our programmes. We are now at a stage where more effort is needed to overcome the challenges and obstacles in the implementation process in countries that may require technical assistance. This meeting provides an opportunity for working out modalities of interaction between the participating organizations as well as with the members of 1540 Committee on promoting global and regional efforts to enhance implementation of resolution 1540.

You are already aware of the clusters of questions that have been suggested as a way to address some common issues at this meeting. In addition to the issues on exchange of information, the themes that may be addressed by participants as appropriate are:

- (a) the experience of cooperation among organizations in channelling technical assistance;
- (b) the correlation between the mandates of your organizations and the mandate of the 1540 Committee under resolution 1540 and how your secretariats and the 1540 Committee and its experts can facilitate our cooperation, for example developing the Committee's clearing house function in assistance;
- (c) the scope for cooperation between your organization and the 1540 Committee for organizing workshops and other meetings and for country-specific activities; and
- (d) the lessons from thematic or regional approaches, arrangements or other implementation related initiatives that can be shared with the 1540 Committee.

With these questions, the 1540 Committee seeks to look to the future and improve its efforts to cooperate with international organizations. We welcome this opportunity to exchange views and information on useful practices, challenges met and lessons learned, as well as on relevant ongoing programmes that may enhance the implementation of our respective mandates.

I thank you all for your participation and again express appreciation to our host country and the organizers of this meeting.