



1540 Committee

Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004)

**Statement by Ambassador Baso Sangqu, Chair of the 1540 Committee,
at the dinner reception offered by the Permanent Representative of Saudi Arabia
to the United Nations Ambassador Abdallah Y. Al-Mouallimi**

Hotel Waldorf=Astoria, New York City, 10 December 2012

Secretary-General, Your Excellencies, Distinguished Colleagues,

I very much appreciate the generous hospitality of Ambassador Abdallah Al-Mouallimi, for hosting us at this gracious event. Your Excellency, I would like to thank you for the invitation and express my sincere gratitude for offering me the privilege to speak tonight, to such a distinguished audience, with so many friends, and colleagues.

Secretary-General, I particularly welcome your presence and your support of resolution 1540 (2004).

As the Permanent Representative of South Africa, I have had the honor of chairing the 1540 Committee from January 2011. South Africa's second term on the Security Council is now coming to a close, and so is my tenure as Chairperson of the Committee. I would like therefore to seize the opportunity of this occasion to share my thinking about the achievements in the past two years, and also give a forward-look.

Resolution 1540 (2004) represents a significant milestone in the efforts of the international community to curb the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, by placing upon each UN Member State specific obligations in order to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-state actors. The distinguished participants gathered here know well the three main obligations for States stemming from resolution 1540: an obligation 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 to adopt and enforce appropriate effective laws to prohibit and prosecute such activities from 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 and mass destruction and their means of delivery.

The 1540 Committee has established itself as an important player in the international disarmament and non-proliferation landscape. The Security Council confirmed and strengthened its central role in facilitating the implementation by States of resolution 1540 (2004), through the adoption of resolution 1977 in April 2011. This encompassed the ten-year extension of the Committee's mandate.

As Chairperson of the 1540 Committee, I have participated in a number of events around the world to promote the full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) by States, and to promote increased cooperation in this area. I have also worked to promote the Committee's role in facilitating assistance to meet the needs of those States that lack the infrastructure and resources to fully implement the resolution. Having participated in outreach events in Africa, Eastern Europe, Europe, North America, South Asia, and the South Pacific, I observe that resolution 1540 (2004) is today widely accepted and understood and that States are making tangible efforts to continue to move towards its full implementation.

In this regard, the 1540 Committee noted in its most recent report to the Security Council, an upward trend in the progress made by States in implementing measures to prevent non-State actors from acquiring nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons and their means of delivery. The Committee also noted that much work remains to be done, and that the gravity of the threat remains considerable.

A continuous and firm commitment from all States to the full implementation of the resolution and the active support of all relevant partners, including relevant international, regional and sub-regional organizations will remain of the utmost importance. In this context, I would like to highlight some of the areas in which further progress is needed:

- States that have already submitted a report to the Committee should be encouraged to continue to inform the 1540 Committee of measures they have taken or intend to take. There are also 24 States that have not submitted a report yet and we encourage them to submit one without delay. I also encourage them to seek the advice of the 1540 Committee's group of experts if needed.
- The facilitation of assistance is a core function of the 1540 Committee, and more needs to be done in this area. Given the improved procedures, I encourage providers of assistance to pay due consideration to the assistance requests relayed to them by the Committee, and to respond in a timely way. Most recently, the Committee has received assistance requests from Mexico and from the Republic of the Congo which, I hope, will get the attention of the providers of assistance.
- Tailored dialogue with States is key for in-depth discussions on relevant aspects of the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) taking into account national specificities. In this context, it was possible for the 1540 Committee to conduct visits to States, at their invitation. As of today, such visits were conducted in the United States, Albania, the Republic of the Congo and Madagascar. The 1540 Committee has also been actively engaged in country-specific activities, for instance, in the form of roundtable meetings organized by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, with support from the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs.
- I would like to mention, also, that the 1540 Committee, in its central role to facilitate the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) by States, needs to better utilize and better mobilize the potential and resources offered by relevant international, regional and sub-regional organizations (IROs). It would be helpful for the Committee to develop a strategy on engaging IROs and other entities, in particular on information-sharing, the exchange of experience and lessons learned and cooperation in assisting Member States.

In this context, I would like to commend efforts by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to keep the Committee abreast of its national efforts to implement the resolution. Your government has submitted an initial report as early as 2004, and since then submitted additional information in March 2011.

Recently, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has also strengthened its dialogue with the 1540 Committee. I appreciate, in this regard, that the Minister Plenipotentiary and Disarmament Department Director Mr Naif B. Al Sudairy has taken the opportunity to engage with me, earlier this year, on the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's interest in providing support to the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). I much appreciated hearing the expression of the readiness of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to continue to work with the Committee, including through financial support for specific projects that will contribute to the implementation of the resolution by States.

Since then, we have heard His Highness Prince Dr. Turki bin Mohammed bin Saud Al-Kabeer, on 28 September 2012 at the High Level event on nuclear terrorism convened by the Secretary-General, announce that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will contribute US\$500,000 to support activities that promote the implementation of the resolution, echoing the announcement made at the Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul last March.

The Secretary-General's engagement on 1540 and succeeding in bringing him to this function will give our work more impetus.

Excellency, I would like to express my appreciation for this important milestone in the relationship between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Committee, and for the new perspectives it offers.

Thank you for your attention.