



# 1540 Committee

Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004)

**Statement by  
Mr. Michael Aho**  
Member of the 1540 Committee

Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of  
the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological  
(Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction

Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland  
December 9, 2013

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Madam Chair,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of Ambassador Oh Joon of South Korea, the Chair of the 1540 Committee, I wish to thank you for the invitation extended to the 1540 Committee to participate in the Meeting of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC).

This year marks the beginning of what I hope will become a tradition of closer collaboration between the 1540 Committee and the BWC with a view toward sharing knowledge, views, and effective practices toward our common goals of mitigating increasing threats to international peace and security posed by biological weapon and toxins.

United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and BWC complement and reinforce each other. Through resolution 1540 (2004), States have been called upon to renew and fulfill their commitment to multilateral cooperation within the BWC framework as important means of pursuing and achieving their common objectives in the area of non-proliferation and of promoting international cooperation for peaceful purposes. States have also been called upon to promote the universal adoption and full implementation of BWC, and, where necessary, its strengthening. The information provided to the Committee by States, whether in the form of national reports or voluntary national implementation action plans often refers to States Parties' fulfilling their obligations under Article 4 of the Convention. Such information also complements the BWC confidence building measures. Taken together, resolution 1540 (2004), BWC and CWC constitute a multi-layer system of preventing the use of disease or poison as weapons by constraining attempts to acquire or make such materials. This 'web of prevention' also helps strengthening the safety and security measures biological weapons-related materials, that is of those materials, equipment and technology covered

by BWC and CWC, or included on national control lists, which could be used for the design, development, production or use of chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery.

April next year will mark the tenth anniversary of resolution 1540 (2004). This is an important milestone in the work of the 1540 Committee and in States efforts to adopt and enforce appropriate effective laws prohibiting activities involving the proliferation of biological weapons and their means of delivery to non-State actors, in particular for terrorist purposes, as well as implementing and enforcing appropriate controls over related materials. In addition, it is also an opportunity to reflect on our accomplishments and address challenges still ahead of us. I would like to briefly share with you some information about the current status of implementing resolution 1540 (2004) as well as States' efforts at outreach, dialogue, assistance, and cooperation in particular in the areas of convergence and synergy with the BWC.

Madam Chair,

The Security Council expressed its intention to monitor closely the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) and, at the appropriate level, to take further decisions which may be required to this end. As of today, 171 of the 193 UN Member States voluntarily reported to the 1540 Committee on their national implementation. This number includes Liberia and South Sudan which submitted their initial reports just this year. Moreover, the 1540 Committee has begun to update its database of information on steps taken to implement the resolution by all States, including measures on biological weapons and related materials. Through resolution 1977 (2011) the Security Council also encouraged States to prepare on a voluntary basis, national implementation action plans, mapping out their priorities and strategies for further implementing resolution 1540 (2004). In 2013, one more State, Kyrgyzstan, submitted its national implementation action plan

bringing to seven the total number of such plans received by the Committee. This year alone, the 1540 Committee experts assisted a number of States, including Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, in this process. The regional workshops organized by the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (Geneva Branch) under the auspices of the European Union BWC Action in South and South-East Asia; Central America and the Caribbean; and in Eastern Europe, also contributed to identifying synergy and convergence between the BWC and resolution 1540 (2004) obligations and facilitated capacity building in the participating States. In addition, the group of experts supporting the 1540 Committee also participated in the development of the BWC National Implementation Guide, a tool where those synergies are emphasized.

The active engagement and dialogue of the Committee with States on their implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) includes visits at the invitation of the States. Members of the Committee and the group of experts visited Albania, Burkina Faso, Grenada, Madagascar, the Republic of the Congo, the Republic of Korea, Trinidad and Tobago, and the United States. The Committee also received invitations to visit the Republic of Moldova, Mozambique, and Niger. This direct engagement provides a good opportunity to discuss the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) with legislators and implementers, review the host country's regulatory and enforcement instruments, and identify effective practices or areas that may need to be strengthened including on biological risk management. During several of these visits, members of the Committee and the group of experts had the opportunity to discuss on site the implementation and enforcement of biosafety/biosecurity measures, for example at the Caribbean Public Health Agency in Trinidad and Tobago; National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the United States; and the Health Sciences Research Institute and the International Centre of Research and Development on

Livestock in Burkina Faso, just to mention a few. In these activities, the Committee routinely highlights the importance of the BWC and its implementation.

Assistance provided to States in need is an area of common interest for BWC and the 1540 Committee. To assist States in meeting potential challenges in implementing the provisions of resolution 1540 (2004), the Security Council has invited States and international, regional and sub-regional organizations to offer assistance in response to requests from other States lacking necessary capabilities and/or resources. The 1540 Committee has been acting as a clearinghouse in matching assistance requests with offers. This year alone, INTERPOL, the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) and the World Health Organization (WHO) have registered as assistance providers for requests received by the Committee, which will particularly strengthen our ability to respond to existing and future request for assistance in the biological area. There are now 49 Member States and 15 International Organizations registered with the Committee as assistance providers. The committee also received notification of the designation of the BWC Implementation Support unit (ISU) as the point of contact for BWC issues. However, considering the ISU's matchmaking role with regard to the Article X database of assistance, it would be mutually beneficial to expand our future cooperation by addressing any opportunities or options to strengthen our respective assistance mechanisms, in particular since many States (Canada, Cuba, Mexico, Pakistan, and the United States, just to mention a few) notified the 1540 Committee about their willingness to provide assistance with BWC implementation.

As the possibility of use or threat of use of biological and toxin weapons or other toxic materials by terrorists and other nefarious non-State actors cannot be excluded, our common goal also extends to providing safety and security of such materials. In this regard, governments and non-governmental entities have a shared interest in ensuring

that the life sciences and biotechnology are used for the common good and in a responsible manner. The committee and its group of experts participated in over 25 bio-related outreach events this year, contributing to raising awareness and building national and regional capacities on biological risk management. Just last week, the Government of Germany in cooperation with the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs and the EU-Outreach in Export Control of Dual-Use Items Program organized in Wiesbaden a conference in support of implementing resolution 1540 (2004) on “*Risks, Challenges and Responses: Industry’s Effective Practices in Responding to Biosecurity Risks*”, a topic often discussed in the BWC forum as well.

As discussed in this forum in several occasions, promoting concerted outreach, education and training activities in biological risk management including such areas covered by resolution 1540 (2004) will serve to strengthen international non-proliferation efforts and enhance capacity-building in States as well as the ability of national stakeholders to do their jobs effectively. In that regard, the 1540 Committee has recently asked all States and many international, regional, and sub-regional organizations to identify and report on lessons learned and effective practices in implementation. The 1540 Committee intends to compile and share this information, including such practices and lessons learned in the biosecurity domain, and looks forward to cooperating with the BWC in this regard.

Madam Chair,

As the scientific, technological, and political challenges associated with effective implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) and BWC will continue to evolve in a multi-factorial fashion, the 1540 Committee will continue to work toward promoting the peaceful uses of science and technology and the integration of global non-proliferation efforts through regional cooperation and individual States engagement including with

the assistance of international, regional and sub-regional organizations as well as the private sector as appropriate.

The rapidly changing global, political, scientific, and technological environment requires the exploitation of all available opportunities for international cooperation. The BWC States Parties are a significant partner in these efforts. The positive dialogue initiated this year with the 1540 Committee will only serve to strengthen the international non-proliferation regime and address future challenges in a cooperative manner based on our shared goals and commitment toward a world without biological weapons.

I wish to thank you once again for the opportunity to speak here today. I wish this meeting every success and look forward to hearing your views on how we might best work together to realize a world safer from the threat of disease or toxins used as weapons.

Thank you very much.

/end/