

**Closing Remarks by Michael Aho, UNSC 1540 Committee Member (United States)
at the Seminar “United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004): Identification
of Effective Practices by Examining UNSCR 1540 after a Decade of Its Existence”
New Delhi, India, 26 February 2014**

Thank you to the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA), King’s College London, the Institute for Strategic Studies, and the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs for their work in holding this important conference in New Delhi. I will make a few clarifying remarks based on discussions, and also highlight a few key messages I heard yesterday and today that I will take back to the 1540 Committee. As we are in the 10th anniversary year of resolution 1540 (2004), it is evident that much has been achieved with regard to the resolution, particularly with regard to national legislation, but as many speakers and participants noted, there is much that needs to be done with regard to implementation.

It is worth reflecting on IDSA Director-General Dr. Arvind Gupta’s comment from the opening session that resolution 1540 needs to be appreciated beyond a narrow group of experts, as all of us are affected by terrorism—which is why the role of civil society is so important. As India’s Ministry of External Affairs Joint Secretary Amandeep Gill said, harmonization between governments and private industry has been key to India’s implementation experience. One effective practice raised in his inaugural address was that bilateral assistance is worthwhile, particularly as India has shared its 2005 WMD act with ASEAN, allowing for a discussion of legislative needs. All Member States would benefit from reviewing India’s practices and lessons.

Allow me to address the issue of sovereignty which was raised during this conference. The 1540 Committee in no way seeks or discusses ways to interfere in a State’s affairs. This reality relates to another question raised by many of you: why is resolution 1540 so State-centric? It is because the basic principle of resolution 1540, as I noted in my opening remarks, is cooperation. It is not designed to be a punitive resolution like others in the field of non-proliferation. The Security Council is permitted under the UN Charter to obligate States, and that is what resolution 1540 does. The implementation and reporting related to it are the sole prerogative of the State involved. For example, if a State requests that its national implementation report not be published on our Committee’s website, then it will not be.

Overall, from this conference, we can catalogue effective practices in a wide range of areas, including as noted earlier, industry engagement, catchall controls, and enforcement. One clear effective practice, which admittedly is complicated and multi-layered to implement, is having a high-level political commitment to ensure that working-level efforts lead to actual implementation.

We also heard suggestions for more detailed guidance on issues from catchall implementation at the border, to guidance to business and for more usable resolution 1540 reporting templates and materials. We also talked some about codes of conduct, and we must think more about how to systematically engage universities and researchers broadly, including through codes of conduct.

One effective practice that the 1540 Committee is already working on is how to engage the public through a media strategy. In this 10th anniversary year, we can use that occasion to highlight the resolution to members of the media, but allow me to make a request of you:

please send ideas to me in my capacity as Coordinator of the 1540 Committee Working Group on Transparency and Media Outreach. This is also a good opportunity to suggest members of civil society, industry, and academia share insights with the editors of The 1540 Compass.

One area where the Committee has decided to focus this year is on working with academia. I welcome academic efforts on the future of resolution 1540 and on issues related to control lists, as an example. But there is much that needs to be thought through.

While recognising that resources of the resolution 1540 Committee are finite and the work to be done is significant, there is a role for regional coordinators and for national and international outreach programs. However, civil society has a role to play in bridging the gap. In particular, civil society can support countries that have resource constraints. This is a good idea and one that the Committee has welcomed, when the relevant State seeks such collaboration, and we all should work together in the remaining seven years of the resolution's current mandate.

The Security Council in early May, under the presidency of the Republic of Korea which also chairs the 1540 Committee, will hold a meeting dedicated to reflecting on the 10th anniversary of resolution 1540. We will also seek to adopt a presidential statement at that meeting. I would encourage all of you to ensure your governments, fellow civil society members, academia, industry, and publics are aware, since this can be a good opportunity to share effective practices and other views, as appropriate. As Rajiv Nayan suggested, civil society could in fact ease the government's burden for public education.

On behalf of the 1540 Committee, we look forward to considering this conference's report, which will capture the effective practices identified. I thank you very much for your participation, and please keep the dialogue going.

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