

Check against delivery!

**STATEMENT BY H.E. MS. LACHEZARA STOEVA, PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
THE 1540 OPEN BRIEFING, 9 October 2024**

Mr. Chair,

Bulgaria aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union. I would like to highlight several points in my national capacity.

I would like to thank Ambassador De La Gasca of Ecuador and the 1540 Committee for organizing this Open Briefing as well as the Group of Experts for their work.

For 20 years now Security Council Resolution 1540 has been the only global legally binding instrument aimed at countering the proliferation of WMD by non-state actors. It is a central pillar of the international non-proliferation architecture and a key part of the international efforts to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including to terrorists and other non-state actors. It complements existing non-proliferation treaties, such as the **Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)**, the **Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)**, and the **Biological Weapons Convention (BWC)** and by extending their principles to non-state actors and setting binding requirements on all UN member states, it fills a gap that these treaties do not fully address. Bulgaria is steadfast in its commitment to support the effective and universal implementation of this essential resolution.

Bulgaria welcomed the adoption of Resolution 2663 in 2022, which extends the mandate of the 1540 Committee for another decade, offering a valuable opportunity to enhance its operations. While we acknowledge the progress made, it is imperative to ensure the conditions necessary for the Group of Experts to work effectively on a continuous basis, including the mandated review of internal guidelines. A key advancement will also involve adopting a more inclusive approach to non-proliferation, emphasizing the full, equal, and meaningful participation of women, as highlighted in the new mandate, along with enhanced cooperation with civil society and the private sector. However, the rapid pace of technological advancements in fields such as **biotechnology, artificial intelligence, and cyber capabilities** creates new challenges for the 1540 regime, challenges that we need to adequately address as these innovations can increase the availability of dual-use technologies and make it easier for non-state actors to develop or access WMDs.

Mr. Chair,

In times of heightened geopolitical tensions, with terrorism on the rise, and the risk of non-state actors acquiring WMD, the significance of UNSCR 1540 and the preventive measures enshrined therein are ever more evident. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has thrown a light on the broader relevance of UNSCR 1540 regime and exposed the vulnerability of chemical, biological and nuclear facilities and the vital importance of ensuring control and monitoring. That is why we call for increased international cooperation across borders and sectors, better

information exchange, and effective enforcement of the necessary legislative frameworks and other relevant mechanisms to ensure the full implementation of UNSCR 1540.

The implementation of UNSCR 1540 is not only about non-proliferation. It also encourages and strengthens a wide range of other goals: border control, trade and export control, environmental protection and public health. On that note, Bulgaria has put all the relevant legislation into effect, and the implementing authorities work well in concert. The success of the the 1540 regime largely depends on effective national enforcement measures and cooperation at national, regional and global levels.

I would like to conclude by reaffirming Bulgaria's unwavering commitment to the universal and effective implementation of Resolution 1540. Bulgaria stands ready to continue assisting partner countries in building their capacities, strengthening non-proliferation initiatives, and ensuring global security.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.