

UNICRI's Speech for the 1540 Committee Open Briefing

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, and colleagues,

It is an honour to address this open briefing and highlight UNICRI's unwavering commitment to preventing and mitigating the threats posed by weapons of mass destruction.

Through a wide range of programmatic interventions, we work tirelessly to assist States in fulfilling their obligations under United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540. For example, UNICRI is supporting the EU CBRN Centres of Excellence initiative, funded by the European Union, which strengthens the capacity of a network of 64 countries to reduce chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear risks. Under the responsibility of National CBRN Focal Points and their inter-ministerial teams, support is provided to implement a wide range of activities, including the development of national and regional action plans.

We are also proud of our CONTACT Programme, which focuses on countering the illicit trafficking of radiological and nuclear materials. By using an intelligence-led approach, this programme works closely with law enforcement and intelligence agencies to prevent RN materials from falling into the hands of malicious actors.

Another key area of our programmatic work is addressing the rising threat of chemical weapons terrorism. UNICRI's projects in this domain aim to improve detection, response, and investigation capacities at both the national and international levels. Additionally, our global programme on counter-proliferation finance and sanctions, the first ever UN-led initiative of its kind, underscores our commitment to combating the financial networks that support WMD proliferation.

These capacity-building efforts are vital in enhancing national and regional resilience to WMD-related threats. But, today, I do not only want to focus on UNICRI's wide range of capacity-building activities, I also want to highlight an important new information-sharing initiative: the *1540 Compass*.

The *1540 Compass* is an online journal published by UNICRI three times per year, which aims to be a trusted source of knowledge, analysis, and dialogue for countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery by non-State actors. Our vision for the *1540 Compass* is bold and ambitious. We wish to foster a space for meaningful dialogue among Member States, academic experts, policymakers, and practitioners, and promote the work of the 1540 Committee and its Group of Experts. By addressing knowledge gaps, sharing best practices, and nurturing discussion, the *1540 Compass* promises to contribute to global efforts to counter the grave threat of WMD proliferation and reinforce international peace and security.

To date, we have published two issues of the *1540 Compass*. The first, published in April this year, was a reflection on the progress made since the adoption of the resolution, marking its 20th anniversary. The second issue, published in September, focused on the importance of operative paragraphs 3(c) and (d): these key provisions decide that States must establish robust export and border control systems to prevent proliferation, irrespective of whether these States are members of other international conventions or arrangements. We are profoundly grateful for the support we have received so far from Member States, Permanent Representatives and other IROs, which have made these two issues a resounding success.

The third issue, which will address operative paragraphs 3(a) and (b), is set to be released before the end of the year. UNICRI warmly invites all Member States, stakeholders, and experts to actively engage with the *1540 Compass* by submitting articles, responses, and event notifications for the next issue. As always, our goal is to foster a nuanced and thoughtful discussion within the community of professionals, practitioners and experts dedicated to the implementation of UNSCR 1540.

In closing, let me reiterate UNICRI's firm commitment to the shared goal of preventing WMD threats. Through our programmes and the *1540 Compass*, we remain dedicated to working with the 1540 Committee, its Group of Experts, and Member States to advance global security.