

**Remarks by Daniel Feakes, Chief, BWC Implementation Support Unit, United Nations Office for
Disarmament Affairs**

Open Consultations on the Comprehensive Review of Resolution 1540 (2004)

30 May – 2 June 2022

Mr. Chair,

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

- At the outset, I would like to express my appreciation for the invitation to attend these Open Consultations on the Comprehensive Review of SC resolution 1540 and to thank you, Mr. Chair, for convening this meeting.
- Furthermore, I would like to thank the group of experts and the ODA 1540 Support Team for their excellent collaboration with the BWC Implementation Support Unit over the past few years.
- I would also like to thank the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu, for her opening remarks.

- As has been flagged in many statements during these consultations, since its adoption in 2004, resolution 1540 has played an important role in the global non-proliferation regime.
- The implementation of resolution 1540 contributes to preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-state actors. Resolution 1540 also affirms support for the multilateral treaties, including the BWC.
- This year, the BWC marks 50 years since it was opened for signature in 1972. The BWC is an important part of the global disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control regime. With the recent accession of Namibia to the BWC, it now has 184 States Parties and others among the remaining 13 States not party are making efforts to join the Convention in the near future.
- As has been highlighted in many statements to these consultations, there are strong synergies between the relevant multilateral treaties and resolution 1540. This includes the BWC, as was recognized by the Eighth BWC Review Conference in 2016 which recalled that resolution 1540 “places obligations on all states and is consistent with the provisions of the Convention.” The Conference also noted that resolution 1540 “affirms support for the multilateral treaties whose aim is to eliminate or prevent proliferation of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and the importance for all States Parties to these treaties to implement them fully in order to promote international stability”

Ladies and gentlemen,

- Resolution 1540 and the BWC go through their review processes at the same time – 2016 and now again in 2022, albeit postponed in both cases due to the COVID pandemic. Some common issues are likely to arise during the parallel review processes.

- States Parties to the BWC are currently preparing for its Ninth Review Conference which will take place in Geneva in November and December this year, having been postponed from last November.
- The Preparatory Committee concluded successfully last month with agreement on various procedural issues and on the nomination of Ambassador Leonardo Bencini of Italy as the President-Designate of the Review Conference. States Parties are now in the process of preparing substantively for the Review Conference.
- As the Secretary-General has noted, the weaknesses and global lack of preparedness exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic provides a window onto how a bioterrorist attack might unfold – and may increase its risks.
- It is noteworthy that the background paper prepared for this meeting mentions that among the different weapons categories, on a global basis 61% of the possible measures were recorded in relation to nuclear weapons, compared to 58% for chemical weapons and only 50% for biological weapons.

Ladies and gentlemen,

- The working relationship between resolution 1540 and the BWC has been and remains strong. This was reflected most recently in 1540 participation in national workshops that we organized in the Dominican Republic and Suriname.
- The ISU has established a point of contact for the 1540 Committee which facilitates cooperation, collaboration and information sharing on BWC-related matters.
- Since the last Comprehensive Review of resolution 1540 in 2016, the ISU has enhanced its collaboration with the 1540 Committee including its Group of Experts. The ISU has participated in 17 resolution 1540 related activities and briefed on BWC matters, and experts from the Group of Experts have attended 10 BWC meetings and events to address 1540 related issues.
- The establishment of 1540 Coordinators for Africa and Asia by UNODA has further facilitated collaboration and will contribute to the enhanced implementation of the BWC by its States Parties in these regions. The ISU has also worked closely on 1540-related activities undertaken by relevant regional organizations such as the African Union, the OAS and the OSCE.
- Many references have been made during these consultations to the importance of capacity-building for developing States. This is something which the ISU continues to strongly focus on, particularly supported by voluntary contributions from several States Parties and regional organizations in the framework of Article X of the BWC.
- In particular, with support from the European Union, the ISU is providing implementation support to several developing States Parties to assist them in improving BWC implementation.
- Just recently, the ISU has begun to implement a new project focusing on enhancing implementation and universalization of the BWC in Africa, to respond in a more systematic and sustainable way to the many requests for assistance received from countries in Africa.
- Since 2021, the 1540 Committee has shared 1540 related assistance requests from UN Member States with the BWC ISU. The ISU has responded to all those assistance requests¹ and offered its support to the requesting UN Member States.

¹ Botswana, Colombia, Sierra Leone

- With respect to assistance, the ISU maintains a cooperation and assistance database in the framework of Article X of the BWC.
- I can provide further information on these initiatives and activities at the appropriate points during the thematic discussions.

- In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that the ISU has a constructive working relationship with the Committee. Resolution 1540 has been a helpful force of support in reinforcing the BWC and enhancing its implementation in States Parties.
- Going forward, we will work to improve such efforts by continuing to cross-participate in each other's events, planning projects together, and by emphasizing the complimentary and mutually-reinforcing nature of the two regimes.
- Thank you for your attention and I look forward to continued cooperation with the 1540 Committee.