

**Opening remarks by Ambassador José Javier De La Gasca,
Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004)
at the
Madagascar national workshop to strengthen national legislation on
biological weapons (BW) and training on physical control measures to
prevent the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons
(NCB) and related materials**

Antananarivo, 12 – 14 August 2024

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

I wish to thank the Government of Madagascar for the invitation to the 1540 Committee to participate in this workshop to strengthen national legislation on biological weapons and for training on physical protection measures to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and related materials. This is the fourth visit to Madagascar undertaken by the 1540 Committee.

Against this background, I would like to thank and congratulate Madagascar for the submission to the Committee in March 2023 of a voluntary National Implementation Action Plan in the follow up of the last visit of the Committee in November 2022 that aimed to support this goal.

This workshop focuses on multiple obligations from resolution 1540 (2004), and I hope it will serve Madagascar's efforts to make further progress in resolution 1540 implementation.

It is encouraging to see so many national stakeholders present here today and who have a role to play in the implementation of resolution 1540. We look forward to their active participation in discussions over the next three days.

Please, allow me to also acknowledge and warmly welcome the invitation of international partner States and international and regional organizations who will contribute to the workshop and are also able to offer various forms of assistance and support in the implementation of resolution 1540.

Though the mentioned implementation of the resolution is a responsibility of States, assistance from the international community continues to play a significant role in enhancing capacities needed to meet their 1540-related

obligations. Additionally, resolution 2325 (2016) further urged the 1540 Committee to continue to strengthen its role in facilitating technical assistance for implementation of resolution 1540 by engaging actively in matching offers and requests for assistance. Therefore, it is our hope that this workshop will contribute towards this aim.

Since its adoption 20 years ago, resolution 1540 has become a vital component of the global non-proliferation architecture. It should be noted that obligations set forth in resolution 1540 do not conflict with or alter rights and obligations of State Parties to existing international disarmament and non-proliferation instruments. It establishes additional obligations to address existing gaps in current international instruments. Every State should be assured that full implementation of the resolution by States does not hamper international cooperation in trade with materials, equipment, and technology for peaceful purposes.

In addition, I would like to stress that measures to prevent proliferation of nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons remains a key obligation of States and, ultimately, the implementation of resolution 1540 is a national responsibility. It is also important to raise the fact that the regime set up by resolution 1540 does not concern only States that possess the relevant WMD-related technologies: the obligations concern all States.

The threat posed by non-State actors, including those with terrorist purposes seeking to acquire or use weapons of mass destruction, does not recognize borders. Every single State should be involved in this global effort. That is what makes every State's national performance so crucial for achieving the goals set out by resolution 1540. Your commitments and their transposition into national legislation, norms, and practice, in particular, will make a genuine difference in this regard.

Again, let me congratulate Madagascar on its commitment and the steps it has been undertaking towards the full and effective implementation of resolution 1540, thereby contributing to achieving the objectives of the resolution and contributing to international peace and security.

Thank you.