

## Information Note<sup>1</sup>

- Event:** Inaugural International Synthetic Biology and Biosecurity Conference in Africa
- Organizers:** Synbio Africa
- Date and Venue:** 13 to 15 October 2021, Kampala, Uganda (hybrid meeting)
- Participants:** Representatives from the health and agricultural fields of African States, non-governmental organizations, universities, private companies, national agencies and 1540 Expert.

### **Background**

On 12 August 2021, Mr Otim Geoffrey, Founder & CEO of SynBio Africa, sent a letter to the Chair of the 1540 Committee inviting the 1540 Committee Group of Experts to participate in the hybrid International Synthetic Biology and Biosecurity Conference in Africa, held in Kampala, Uganda, from 14 to 16 October 2021.

Synbio Africa, based in Uganda, constitutes a forum for researchers, students, citizen scientists, policy makers and the public at large to convene and develop successful pathways for the propagation of synthetic biology technologies, products, and services throughout Africa.

### **Highlights**

Mr Otim Geoffrey, Founder & CEO, SynBio Africa and Dr Monica Musenero, Uganda Minister for Science, Technology, and Innovation delivered introductory remarks.

During the first session of the conference, the 1540 Expert described the requirements under resolution 1540 (2004) for States to implement measures to prevent proliferation of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, their means of delivery and related materials by non-State actors. She also described the domestic control measures to prevent the proliferation of such weapons, their means of delivery, and related materials, emphasizing the measures related to the implementation of Operative Paragraph 3 (a) & (b). She also presented a brief overview of the updated data on the status of implementation of resolution 1540. Additionally, the Expert made a short reference to the ongoing Comprehensive Review process.

During the session on biosafety and biosecurity, various universities, national agencies and non-governmental organizations delivered short presentations on different aspects related to biosafety and biosecurity measures and the session ended with a panel discussion composed

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<sup>1</sup> For information – not an official report. The views expressed here do not necessarily represent those of the 1540 Committee or of the organizers or participants in the event.

by representatives from CDC Africa, the US Federal Bureau of Investigation and the 1540 Expert.

The rest of the meeting was devoted to subjects such as training and workforce development in synthetic biology, various synthetic biology applications or investment and financing this kind of technology among others.

### **Additional Comments**

For further information, please contact the 1540 Committee experts by e-mail at [1540experts@un.org](mailto:1540experts@un.org)