

Information Note¹

- Event:** Regional parliamentary seminar on engaging parliaments of the Pacific region in the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004)
- Organizer:** Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Parliament of New Zealand with the support of the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)
- Date and Venue:** 18-20 September 2019, Wellington, New Zealand

Background

- On 30 July 2019, the Secretary General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Mr Martin Chungong, sent a letter to the Chair of the 1540 Committee inviting the Chair, as well as members of the Group of Experts, to participate in a regional parliamentary seminar on engaging parliaments of the Pacific region in the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).
- The objectives of the seminar are to raise awareness of the resolution, its provisions, and its significance for countries that do not possess WMDs but that could be used to transact WMDs (or related materials); examine challenges to oversight and implementation; examine the role parliaments can and should play; and allow for an exchange of experience among parliaments with different capacity levels and at different stages of implementation of the resolution.
- The output of the seminar would be an issue brief or similar conclusive record following the end of the seminar to capture the main lessons learnt and applicable to the specific region. The brief would be circulated to all seminar participants as well as to parliaments in the region. The expected results are strengthened regional cooperation as well as a clearer sense in countries in the region of the risks they share and of the measures they need to undertake to protect themselves and others against WMDs.
- Two Experts attended the conference.

Overview

The program was officially opened in the evening of 18 September with remarks by Rt Hon Trevor Mallard, MP, the Speaker of the New Zealand House of Representatives, followed by two key note addresses from Rt Hon Winston Peters, New Zealand Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control, and Hon Saber Chowdhury, Honorary President of Inter-Parliamentary Union. Both emphasized that contributing to international peace and security has

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been the founding principle of the IPU for the last 130 years since its establishment in 1889 and that promoting resolution 1540 (2004) is one of their priorities. They also reiterated that this was the second regional conference on promoting resolution 1540 (2004) after the successful workshop held in 2016 for African countries.

The meeting then opened the morning of 19 September with three sets of opening remarks by Hon Anne Tolley, Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of New Zealand, Rt Hon David Carter, a member of the Parliament of New Zealand and Hon Saber Chowdhury, Honorary President of the IPU. Mr Ismail Balla of UNODA also made opening remark by video message. Following the opening remarks, a video was shown to the participants introducing the work of the 1540 Committee and highlighting the significant role Parliamentarians can play in implementing resolution 1540 (2004), by the Committee Chair H.E. Mr. Dian Triansyah Djan.

1540 Experts made three presentations: an overview of resolution 1540 (2004) including key requirements and implementation of provisions of the resolution; on prohibited activities under the resolution and the links between relevant treaties and the resolution; and on tools used by the 1540 Committee to promote full implementation of the resolution, focused on the 1540 Matrix.

The participating Parliamentarians agreed a joint statement in which they acknowledged the crucial role of Parliamentarians in supporting implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) through their legislative, oversight, budgetary and representation functions and in being champions for the resolution within their States, as well as the value in contextualizing the approach to fulfilling obligations under the resolution in the Pacific due to State specificities.

Additional Comments

For further information, please contact the 1540 Committee experts by e-mail at 1540experts@un.org