

Information Note¹

Event: African Union (AU) Workshop on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004)

Organizer: AU with the support of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)

Venue and Date: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 10-11 December 2013

Participants: **States:** Algeria, Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Comoros, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, United States of America (US)

Other Entities: Western Sahara

Regional Organisations:

East African Community (EAC)
Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)
North African Regional Capability (NARC)
Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)
Southern African Development Community (SADC)
Forum of Nuclear Regulatory Bodies in Africa (FNRBA)
AU Commission: Department of Peace and Security and Office of the Legal Counsel

International Organisations:

1540 Committee Chair, Committee Member and Group of Experts
UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)
UN Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa (UNREC)
International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO)
Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)
World Customs Organization (WCO)
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI)
Panel of Experts: UN Security Council resolution 1737 (2006)

Non-Governmental Organisations:

African Bio-safety Association (AfBSA)
Institute for Security Studies (ISS)

1. **Objectives**

As a follow-up to the 2012 African Workshop on resolution 1540 (2004), the workshop aimed at bringing together the 1540 Points of Contact in Africa to, among other things, provide them with an overview on

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the progress achieved among AU Member States in implementing resolution 1540 (2004) and the status of reporting; sensitise them on effective practices in the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), including on voluntary national implementation action plans; explain the role of the 1540 Committee in matching offers and requests for assistance, voluntary national implementation action plans, country visits, and how they can access and request available assistance and resources.

The workshop also provided an opportunity to share national priorities, challenges, and experiences of different approaches to legislation and implementation.

2. **Background**

Resolution 1977 (2011), *inter alia*, encouraged relevant regional and sub-regional organizations to enhance cooperation and information sharing with the 1540 Committee on technical assistance and all other issues of relevance for the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

Following the first “Workshop for African States on the Implementation of United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004)”, which was held from 21-22 November 2012 in Pretoria, Republic of South Africa, the 20th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the (African) Union, held on 27-28 January 2013 in Addis Ababa, adopted a decision, Assembly/AU/Dec.472(XX), wherein the convening of the Pretoria workshop was welcomed and the AU Commission was requested to take all necessary steps, in collaboration with the 1540 Committee and the relevant partners, to implement the proposals and recommendations made at the workshop in support of Member States’ efforts in implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

In accordance with this decision, the AU Commission decided to organise the second 1540 Workshop, which was held from 10-11 December 2013 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

3. **Highlights of discussions**

Following the opening remarks, sessions were held over two days dealing with the obligations derived from resolution 1540 (2004), the synergies and overlap with other non-proliferation instruments, the implementation of the resolution in Africa, national points of contact and voluntary national implementation action plans. There was also an exchange of national experiences on the implementation of the resolution, including on developing control lists and the hosting of 1540 country visits at the invitation of governments. Furthermore, the issue of assistance was highlighted and the meeting was informed of the contribution of regional economic communities and other regional instruments and organizations to the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) in Africa.

In his opening remarks, the AU Commission’s Director of the Department of Peace and Security reaffirmed the AU’s commitment to the multilateral disarmament, non-proliferation and counter-terrorism regimes. He recalled the 2006 Memorandum of Understanding signed by the AU with the OPCW that aims to establish an effective mechanism for collaboration and joint action in assisting African States Parties to meet their obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). Mention was also made of the AU’s efforts to advance the implementation of the Pelindaba Treaty and to assist with the operationalisation of the African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCONE). He referred to the work of the Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources, including in the context of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and the International Health Regulations to promote standards, methods and procedures in animal health. He also emphasized that the AU Protocol on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism incorporates Member States’ obligations under resolution 1540 (2004), as the instrument requires measures to prevent criminal and terrorist groups from acquiring and using nuclear, chemical and biological material. He concluded by confirming that the hosting of the follow-up 1540 workshop is an expression of the AU’s commitment to support member States’ with their efforts to implement resolution 1540 (2004).

The Chair of the 1540 Committee, in his keynote statement, expressed his appreciation to the AU Commission for their support of the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), and provided an overview of recent developments that have had an impact on the implementation of the resolution, such as the need for 22 States that have yet to submit an initial report on their implementation of the resolution. He also highlighted the value of direct contact with States as an effective means of dialogue, and in this regard referred to the visits undertaken by the 1540 Committee to States, at their invitation, where the aim of these visits included identifying implementation gaps and identifying assistance needs. References were also made to the progress made by African States in the implementation of the resolution and the availability of assistance for 1540 implementation. The Chair concluded by expressing the commitment of the 1540 Committee to work in close partnership with the AU and African States.

The conclusions reached at the workshop were the following:

AU Commission

- Further develop an African approach on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) with a central coordination role by the African Union
- The African Union was encouraged to strengthen its active role in assisting African States with their implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), including on 1540 related education, and build upon those initiatives already undertaken

National Point of Contact

- Note was taken that 11 African States have already submitted to the 1540 Committee a national point of contact. States that have not already submitted a point of contact are encouraged to do so. The need to continue to develop activities to further enhance the capacity of national points of contact and engage them in relevant initiatives and capacity-building programs was emphasized.
- It was also noted the important role that regional economic communities can play in facilitating the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) by States and in this regard recommends that these communities also designate a 1540 point of contact.

National Reports

- It was noted that a significant number of African States have already submitted a national report, and it is recommended that States that have not submitted a first report expedite the process of submission. In this regard, note is taken of the program developed by **UNREC** to facilitate the submission of initial reports.

Visits to States

- The value of visits to States was highlighted, as an important tool to facilitate gap analysis, inter-agency coordination, awareness raising of the resolution among relevant stakeholders, identification of assistance needs, and overall implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). Note was taken of further visits to take place in Africa.

National Implementation Action Plans

- The value of developing 1540 national implementation action plans was recognized. Note was taken of African States having initiated the development of such plans. The valuable role of the 1540 Committee and its experts and the African Union to assist in the development of these plans was highlighted.

Control Lists

- The complexity of developing a national control list was noted, and it was emphasized that an African approach in this area should be promoted. Options on developing control lists were discussed. It was noted also that competences exist on the African continent that could be shared with interested partners, and that development of further technical competencies should be supported.

Assistance

- Assistance was recognized as a key element to facilitate the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) on the continent. In this regard, an overview was provided of the assistance mechanism of the 1540 Committee, and of existing assistance and capacity-building programs that States can resort to in implementing resolution 1540 (2004).

4. Additional Comments

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