

Information Note¹

- Event:** *Workshop for African States on the Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004)*
- Organizers:** Hosted by the Government of South Africa in collaboration with the African Union (AU), with support by the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) and with the facilitation of the Institute for Security Studies (ISS)
- Date and Venue:** 21-22 November 2012, Pretoria, South Africa
- Participants:** *States:* Algeria, Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Republic of the Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Malawi, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, United States of America, Zambia, Zimbabwe
- International, regional and sub-regional organizations:* African Union (AU), Biological Weapons Convention Implementation Support Unit (BWC-ISU), Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), Southern African Development Community (SADC), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), World Customs Organization (WCO), World Health Organization (WHO), 1540 Committee (Chairman, Committee members and experts)
- Civil society, private sector and academia:* Institute for Security Studies (ISS), Stimson Center

1. Objectives

The Workshop for African States on the Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) aimed to identify and explore the synergies available to African States to advance their socio-economic development objectives while developing national capacities for UNSCR 1540 implementation and reporting. The workshop benefited from the participation of the 1540 Committee Chair (Ambassador Baso Sangqu), members (South Africa and United Kingdom) and experts. National representatives delivered presentations² aimed at sharing experiences in implementing resolution 1540 (2004) on the African continent, which highlighted efforts and achievements, as well as remaining challenges. The matter of assistance was also discussed in this context, in particular in areas such as border security, legislation drafting, and biosecurity. Intergovernmental organizations also delivered presentations on their capabilities and programs for providing resolution 1540-related assistance.

The 1540 Committee experts participated in this event to:

¹ 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.

² By Algeria, Republic of the Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, South Africa, Tunisia and Uganda

- Provide details and expert advice on the obligations of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1977 (2011), and the role played by the 1540 Committee.
- Discuss (in the plenary and, as needed, in bilateral consultations) the purpose of the 1540 Matrices, national reports, voluntary action plans, national points of contact, and visits to States at their invitation.
- Strengthen coordination with regional and international organizations on providing resolution 1540-related assistance, and emphasize the clearinghouse role of the 1540 Committee to facilitate the delivery of assistance.

2. **Background**

Certain developments towards a full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) by States took place on the African continent recently, such as the African Union Commission's establishment of a point of contact and its formal submission of this information to the 1540 Committee in August 2011, the submission of first national reports by Togo (2010), Gabon (2011), Ethiopia (2011) and Congo (2012), visits to States at their invitation (Congo and Madagascar in 2012), and the submission of assistance requests by several African States.

3. **Highlights**

The Director for Peace and Security at the African Union Commission, Mr. El-Ghassim Wane, thanked and commended Ambassador Baso Sangqu "*for his commitment and his efforts towards ensuring that the needs of African States and the peculiarities of the African context are adequately taken into consideration as far as the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) is concerned*". Noting that African States have competing priorities that they have to address with limited financial and human resources, Mr. Wane underscored that obligations stemming from non-proliferation instruments should not be seen as an extra burden, adding that they can bring benefits in terms of development goals.

Mr. Wane stated that the AU will undertake the following to further promote and enhance the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004):

- Liaise with AU Member States to communicate the outcomes of the workshop and encourage those that have not yet done so to submit their first report as well as other reports indicating progress and further steps taken in implementation of the obligations under resolution 1540 (2004);
- Report to the Executive Council the outcomes of the workshop with the objective of mobilizing high-level political support;
- Encourage AU Member States to designate national focal points on resolution 1540 (2004) to serve as a point of contact with the 1540 Committee and the AU on all relevant matters;
- Maintain dialogue with Member States as well as with the 1540 Committee and UNODA to enhance coordination and collaboration in outreach activities, resource mobilization, country visits and facilitation of assistance.

The intergovernmental organizations' representatives contributed to raising participants' awareness on the importance of fulfilling their obligations as UN Member States under the WHO's International Health Regulations and the respective treaties and conventions covering nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, as well as the respective assistance available from their organizations, which also helps fulfill resolution 1540 (2004) requirements. Moreover, the speakers emphasized the need for better identification of the convergence and synergy among various obligations under international agreements

and reporting requirements in order to better employ limited national resources and avoid duplication of efforts.

Bilateral consultations were held between participating States and 1540 Committee experts, with a focus on possible next steps of implementation, including the possibility of preparing voluntary national action plans and assistance requests, and submitting initial reports or additional information to the Committee.

4. **Additional comments**

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

Workshop presentations and statements are available online at: <http://wmdafricafiles.blogspot.nl/p/unscr-1540-workshop.html>