

Press release by the Chair of the 1540 Committee on the postponement of the 2021 Comprehensive Review of the status of implementation of resolution 1540 (2004)

27 August 2020

On behalf of the 1540 Committee, I wish to provide a further briefing about Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and the related Comprehensive Review currently underway, following my previous briefing on 30 April 2020.

Since its unanimous adoption on 28 April 2004, resolution 1540 (2004) has been a vital component of the international non-proliferation architecture and main guidance for the international community's efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, their means of delivery and related materials to and by non-State actors. The danger is not simply a theoretical possibility, and no State is immune from the threat. States have made significant progress in meeting the requirements of the resolution. Nevertheless, many gaps remain and the Security Council recognises that the full and effective implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) is a long-term undertaking.

The mandate of the 1540 Committee is to support States in this respect. As I noted on 29 April, this year is an important one: The Committee is conducting a Comprehensive Review, prior to renewal of its mandate on 25 April 2021. The plans included, amongst other events, open consultations with Member States and international, regional and sub-regional organisations, as well as civil society as appropriate. A report on the Review was scheduled to be submitted to the Security Council by 31 December 2020.

However, due to delays caused by the coronavirus pandemic and in order that States may plan accordingly, the Committee has decided that all activities related to the Comprehensive Review, including the open consultations, will be postponed until 2021 with the exception of the process currently underway of revising the Committee matrices, and any other activities that can be undertaken in a virtual format. The Committee will provide further details as soon as it has finalised its plans.

It is vital that resolution 1540 (2004) remains fit for purpose as the centrepiece of international efforts to prevent the exploitation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons by non-State actors.

Thank you for your attention.