



Security Council

Seventy-eighth year

9293rd meeting

Thursday, 23 March 2023, 3.20 p.m.

New York

Provisional

President: Mr. Fernandes (Mozambique)

Members:

Albania	Mr. Stastoli
Brazil	Mr. De Almeida Filho
China	Mr. Geng Shuang
Ecuador	Mr. Pérez Loose
France	Mr. Olmedo
Gabon	Mr. Nanga
Ghana	Ms. Kesse Antwi
Japan	Mrs. Shino
Malta	Ms. Gatt
Russian Federation	Mr. Polyanskiy
Switzerland	Mr. Hauri
United Arab Emirates	Mr. Abushahab
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Jacobs
United States of America	Mr. Wood

Agenda

Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

At this meeting, the Council will hear a briefing by Ambassador Hernán Pérez Loose, Permanent Representative of Ecuador, in his capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004).

I now give the floor to Ambassador Pérez Loose.

Mr. Pérez Loose (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): As the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), I am honoured to address the Security Council on the work of the Committee since the previous briefing, on 14 March 2022 (see S/PV.8993).

Resolution 1540 (2004) remains a vital component of the global non-proliferation architecture that aims to prevent non-State actors from gaining access to weapons of mass destruction, particularly if it is for terrorist purposes. While steady progress was recorded in its implementation, and acknowledging the complexities of its implementation across obligations, weapons categories and regions, the full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) remains a long-term task.

I am pleased to report that, in 2022, as restrictions arising from the coronavirus disease pandemic eased, the Committee was able to conduct most of its work in in-person meetings, supplemented by occasional virtual meetings. In 2022, the Committee held two formal meetings and five informal meetings. The Committee participated in 15 in-person and 14 virtual outreach events in 2022, compared to one in-person and 23 virtual events. In particular, in the reporting period following the adoption of resolution 2622 (2022), on 25 February 2022, and the extension of the mandate of the Committee to 30 November 2022, the Committee successfully completed the comprehensive review of resolution 1540 (2004), in accordance with the provisions of resolution 1977 (2011).

The comprehensive review focused on the status of implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) by Member

States. The Committee also addressed its role in facilitating assistance matchmaking; its collaboration with relevant international, regional and subregional organizations and other United Nations bodies; and its outreach activities. The review was an inclusive process, and the Committee held open consultations with Member States and international, regional and subregional organizations. Relevant civil society organizations also participated informally. Under resolution 2663 (2022), adopted unanimously on 30 November 2022 (see S/PV.9205), the Committee's mandate was extended for a period of 10 years, until 30 November 2032.

During the reporting period, no States submitted first national reports with information on the measures taken to comply with obligations under resolution 1540 (2004). The number of Member States that have submitted their first reports remains at 185, leaving eight States that have not yet done so.

One helpful activity, among others, in implementing resolution 1540 (2004) is the development of voluntary national implementation action plans by States, as encouraged by paragraph 8 of resolution 2663 (2022). The number of States that have submitted such plans to the Committee since 2007 now stands at 38, an increase of three States since the last briefing to the Security Council.

Acknowledging that Member States are in the best position to identify effective national practices, the Committee recognizes the need to promote the sharing of experiences, including through peer reviews and other means to evaluate and reinforce effective practices. Peer reviews have been held all around the world. The number of such reviews is unchanged since the last briefing to the Council. The Committee looks forward to the results of further peer reviews and will continue to support States that wish to conduct them, where appropriate.

To date, a total of 142 Member States, compared to 136 in 2021, have informed the Committee of their national points of contact for the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). No training courses for regional points of contact have been conducted since 2020, due to pandemic-related restrictions. However, the Committee hopes to resume such training courses soon, as circumstances permit.

The Committee plays an important role in facilitating assistance to Member States to fulfil their

1540 obligations by matching assistance requests from States with offers of assistance from States or international, regional or subregional organizations. In 2022, no States submitted new requests for assistance, compared to four in 2021. The Committee received requests for technical and financial support for national events in Madagascar and Sierra Leone.

The Committee web page lists States and international, regional and subregional organizations that offer 1540-related assistance. The Committee stands ready to include new programmes or updated information with regard to available assistance on its website. In addition to assistance provided by States and international, regional and subregional organizations, the Committee and its Group of Experts will continue to undertake visits to States, at their invitation, to discuss national reporting, national action plans, Committee matrices and assistance on implementation measures. The Committee will continue to use its website and the Chair's quarterly message for outreach and enhancing the transparency of its activities. Information relating to participation in outreach events, as well as statements, including video-messages, delivered by or on behalf of the Chair, are regularly uploaded to the Committee's website.

As for the future, in Annex I of my letter dated 16 February 2023 addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2023/117), I forwarded the Committee's twentieth programme of work covering the period from 1 February 2023 to 31 January 2024. The programme includes a comprehensive list of the activities that the Committee intends to undertake to promote the full implementation of the requirements of resolution 1540 (2004) by all Member States, covering areas such as Committee outreach, the Committee's assistance mechanism, cooperation with international, regional and subregional organizations and transparency.

In conclusion, I would like to express my appreciation to my fellow Committee members for their efforts in support of its work, to the Group of Experts, to officials of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and to my staff for their invaluable support to the Committee.

I will now make a statement in my national capacity.

Ecuador reiterates the priority it attaches to Security Council actions on matters concerning the

non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The unanimous adoption of resolution 1540 (2004) was an important and timely measure as part of international efforts aimed at preventing the proliferation to non-State actors of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. The proposed programme of work for this year covers common challenges and goals that will enable us to continue contributing to upholding and strengthening the global disarmament and non-proliferation architecture. We therefore call on all Member States to continue engaging actively and transparently with the work of the 1540 Committee and the Ecuadorian chairpersonship.

The President: I thank Ambassador Pérez Loose for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Stastoli (Albania): Allow me to congratulate and thank Ambassador Pérez Loose of Ecuador for his leadership in advancing the work of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) and for his briefing today.

The year 2022 was a dynamic one for the Committee. We undertook a full review of and report on (see S/2022/899) resolution 1540 (2004) and also succeeded in unanimously adopting resolution 2663 (2022), on the extension of the Committee's mandate until 2032. The comprehensive review, which focused on the status of the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) by Member States, clearly concluded that real progress has been made. It is very encouraging that the overall implementation of the resolution has increased by around 6 per cent since 2016. As we heard from the Chair today, 185 of the 193 States Members of the United Nations have submitted national reports on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). Albania encourages the non-reporting States to submit their first reports, and in that regard, we also advocate for a stronger role for the Committee in supporting States in meeting their obligations. The Committee can play an essential role in facilitating requests for assistance from Member States in fulfilling their obligations under the resolution. Setting up an effective process that reviews and matches requests with offers of assistance would be a welcome step.

The threat of the possession of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) by non-State actors, including terrorists, has not diminished. On the contrary, it has

become much more complex due to the rapid evolution of science and technology, which constitutes a new challenge for non-proliferation. It is up to all of us to see the application of resolution 1540 (2004) assessed and promoted. Our determination to comply with it will certainly help to reduce the threat of WMDs, while inaction will lead us into uncertainty.

With regard to transparency and public awareness of the role and obligations of resolution 1540 (2004), we believe that greater cooperation and better awareness among Member States involving academia, civil society and industry can only strengthen the implementation and effectiveness of the resolution. In particular, we emphasize our support for strengthening the meaningful participation of women in decision-making processes on the implementation of that resolution. To that end, we welcome the 1540 Committee's programme of work for 2023. It is realistic and achievable, and we thank Ecuador for preparing it. The Committee can count on our full support.

Mr. Olmedo (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank the Permanent Representative of Ecuador for his briefing on the work of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004). I wish him and his team an excellent term at the helm of the 1540 Committee.

Next year we will celebrate the twentieth anniversary of resolution 1540 (2004), which remains a pillar of the international non-proliferation framework. The fact is that not only does the threat of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction persist, it is evolving. We are witnessing scientific and technological developments in the biological, chemical and nuclear arenas. At the same time, proliferation channels are becoming more complex, so the risk of biological, chemical and nuclear materials falling into the hands of non-State actors remains. We must therefore ensure that the 1540 Committee retains its capacity to respond to those developments so that States' regulatory frameworks remain adequate to the risks.

We welcomed the adoption on 30 November of resolution 2663 (2022), which renewed the Committee's mandate for 10 years, as well as the adoption of the report of the comprehensive review that was conducted over two years (see S/2022/899). We thank Mexico for the role it played in those difficult negotiations. It is particularly regrettable that we were not able to agree on guiding principles for the Group of Experts.

Progress is being made in the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). A large majority of Member States have adopted measures to incorporate the provisions of the resolution into their national legislation, but further progress is still needed. Some States may need help in implementing the resolution, which is why France attaches particular importance to the issue of assistance. More can be done to improve matching offers of assistance, which are not always easy to identify, to the specific needs expressed by certain States. The Group of Experts should also be mandated to offer assistance on a voluntary basis when necessary.

In parallel, a growing number of international and regional organizations have adopted strategies to implement and promote the resolution's provisions. We also need to deepen cooperation with the relevant forums, such as the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the Biological Weapons Convention, export control regimes and other United Nations committees, such as those dealing with terrorism.

Finally, it is important to raise awareness of resolution 1540 (2004) in order to facilitate its implementation. Working with civil-society organizations remains vital in that regard.

Let me conclude by paying a sincere tribute to the Group of Experts, whose analytical and advocacy work continues to be indispensable.

Mr. De Almeida Filho (Brazil): I thank Ambassador Pérez Loose for his detailed briefing on the activities of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) during a very active year.

Brazil welcomed the renewal of the mandate of the 1540 Committee and of its Group of Experts through the adoption of resolution 2263 (2022) in November. Despite the challenges and divisions, we have all been able to come together and recognize that the 1540 Committee remains a cornerstone of the global disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. Furthermore, we are able to find common ground to update the tools of the Committee, while still preserving the importance of international cooperation in materials, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes. Reaching the necessary compromise to update this crucial disarmament and non-proliferation framework was no easy task, and we thank the delegation of Mexico for its work in chairing the Committee.

Brazil stands ready to continue to play a constructive role in the context of the Committee, as well as through outreach programmes at the regional and global levels. We should continue to improve our ability to assist Member States in implementing their obligations under resolution 1540 (2004), which will require constant dialogue in order to identify gaps and better understand what we, as the Committee, can do to help.

A well-functioning Group of Experts, with a clear and useful mandate, remains essential to aiding the 1540 Committee in its goals. To that end, I call on all of us to exercise the same spirit of compromise that enabled us to reach consensus on adopting resolution 2663 (2022) in November so as to finalize the internal guidelines of the Group of Experts by next month. We have a broad agreement on the role of the Group and on its usefulness to the Committee. Let us now cross this final stretch so that the Group can continue to fulfil the purposes set out for it in resolution 1540 (2004).

Responding resolutely to the spread of weapons of mass destruction is a key challenge for all of us, and Brazil will continue to play its part in that endeavour. The commitment of each and every one of us is central to the functioning of resolution 1540 (2004). However, as we pursue our common goals, we should not jeopardize the balance between the control of sensitive items and access to technologies and goods intended for legitimate uses.

In that regard, I would like to underscore Brazil's view that obligations arising from resolution 1540 (2004) should not create hindrances to access to goods and technologies for legitimate purposes, especially those related to the space programmes of developing countries.

Ms. Gatt (Malta): I thank Ambassador Pérez Loose for his briefing, and I congratulate him on his appointment as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004). As a newly elected Vice-Chair of the Committee, Ambassador Pérez Loose can count on Malta's full support.

Malta places great value on the work of the 1540 Committee, which plays a key role in the global non-proliferation architecture. The adoption of the programme of work is a positive development and will guide the Committee's important activities, including on outreach, assistance, cooperation and transparency.

Malta welcomes the adoption of resolution 2663 (2022), extending the mandate of the Committee for another 10 years. We also express our gratitude to Ambassador Juan Ramón de la Fuente Ramírez of Mexico, as previous Chair of the 1540 Committee, for his leadership, diplomacy and hard work on that resolution. We commend the completion of the comprehensive review, which provided Member States an important opportunity to take stock and review the status of the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). Malta particularly valued the participation of civil society and international and regional organizations in that process.

Malta welcomes the first national reports submitted by 185 Member States on measures taken to comply with their obligations under resolution 1540 (2004), and we encourage the remaining eight States to submit their first reports. Malta further welcomes the voluntary national implementation action plans submitted by 38 States, including the three submitted over the past year. We commend the seven voluntary peer reviews held so far, which are an excellent tool to evaluate effective practices, and we look forward to training for points of contact being resumed once the circumstances allow.

One important role of the Committee is facilitating assistance to Member States by matching assistance requests with offers of assistance. The utility of that role was underlined by States during the comprehensive review. Malta welcomes the ongoing work of the Committee in that respect, including visits to States.

Furthermore, Malta looks forward to the successful adoption of new guidelines for the Group of Experts, which should enable the Group to undertake its actions and work in the most efficient way.

Mr. Abushahab (United Arab Emirates): I thank Ambassador Pérez Loose for his briefing. I assure him of the unwavering support of the United Arab Emirates for the work of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) and his chairmanship. We are grateful to the Group of Experts for its contribution in promoting the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

For nearly two decades, resolution 1540 (2004) has played a unique role within the non-proliferation regime. It has focused on reducing the threat of terrorists and non-State actors acquiring, developing, trafficking in or using weapons of mass destruction. Today that mandate remains as relevant as ever, and

the evolving nature of proliferation continues to pose a threat to international peace and security. In the face of such challenges, we welcome the progress made by States in their implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), while acknowledging that its full and effective implementation is a long-term endeavour.

We were pleased to see the successful completion of the comprehensive review and the unanimous adoption of resolution 2663 (2022) last year under Mexico's able leadership. By renewing the mandate of the 1540 Committee for 10 years, it expanded the horizon in which the Security Council and the Committee can further support Member States in implementing their obligations. That should take us to a new chapter for the global non-proliferation architecture, focused on vigilance, strict controls and mutual accountability.

An important element of resolution 2663 (2022) was that it encouraged the 1540 Committee to give due consideration to the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in all its activities. We believe that integrating the women and peace and security agenda into the non-proliferation context will better address the specific impacts of weapons proliferation on women and girls, lead to more effective policymaking and improve implementation.

The United Arab Emirates also believes that it was particularly important that resolution 2663 (2022) stipulate the significance of continued outreach and assistance by the Committee to Member States, including by cooperating with the relevant international, regional and subregional organizations. The 1540 Committee's Group of Experts provides valuable assistance to Member States. Greater streamlining of the Committee's decision-making processes related to tasks assigned to the Group of Experts would be especially constructive in that regard.

We appreciate the efforts of the Chair and his team, as well as those of the United Kingdom, to ensure that the Committee was recently able to adopt a programme of work after two years of stalemate. We look forward to engaging with other members in executing the activities that it outlines.

We are all witnessing the rapid pace of technological advancements in recent years, such as in artificial intelligence (AI). The risk that non-State actors could misuse AI to acquire or develop weapons of mass destruction serves to highlight the importance of States and of the non-proliferation architecture with

regard to resolution 1540 (2004). Both are making significant efforts to stay ahead of the evolving nature of risks and rapid advances in science and technology, as called for in resolution 2663 (2022). It is essential that Governments and technology companies work together to develop effective safeguards and monitoring mechanisms to prevent such misuse, and it is important for the Security Council to stay ahead of that curve.

Mr. Geng Shuang (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I would like to thank Ambassador Hernán Pérez Loose, Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), for briefing the Security Council on the Committee's work. I congratulate him on assuming that important post.

The active work of the Committee last year yielded tangible results and effectively promoted cooperation on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) and international non-proliferation. The Committee, the Group of Experts and the Secretariat have all made efforts and contributions to that end, which China appreciates.

In recent years we have seen a deepening international consensus on non-proliferation and increasingly effective and stronger efforts to counter proliferation among non-State actors. Meanwhile, the non-proliferation situation remains grave. Unilateralism and double standards are on the rise. Developing countries still face restrictions on their peaceful use of technology. The inequitable and unreasonable elements in the international non-proliferation regime are becoming increasingly pronounced. In view of the current non-proliferation situation, the Committee's new comprehensive review process and longer-term non-proliferation efforts, I would like to share the following observations.

First, we must create a favourable international security environment. Parties should uphold a vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, practise true multilateralism, adhere to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations in order to peacefully settle disputes, promote unity and cooperation, abandon the Cold War mindset, renounce division and confrontation, jointly respond to global and regional security threats and build a community with shared security through dialogue and cooperation.

Secondly, we must build on and strengthen the current non-proliferation regime. The non-proliferation

architecture, underpinned by international treaties, Security Council resolutions and the relevant international bodies, has played an indispensable role in the maintenance of international peace and security. Parties should further strengthen the authority and effectiveness of the major international treaties, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention, uphold the role and functions of the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, among other bodies, and firmly oppose any politicization of their work. We must also ensure that they are not used as tools for pursuing geopolitical goals.

Thirdly, we should vigorously advance capacity-building in Member States. We encourage Member States to identify priority goals and areas for the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) that are commensurate with their own international obligations and national conditions. Resources for providing technical assistance and international cooperation should be increased, with a focus on helping developing countries meet their shortfalls in non-proliferation mechanisms, technologies and talents. New proliferation risks resulting from technological advances, especially emerging technologies, should be taken seriously. Government regulation should be reinforced and an environment conducive to the relevant technological advances encouraged.

Fourthly, we must ensure the right to peaceful use. Countries have a legitimate right to enjoy the dividends of technological advances. That principle is affirmed by the relevant international treaties and Council resolutions and by General Assembly resolution 76/234, entitled "Promoting international cooperation and peaceful use in the context of international security", sponsored by China. We should strike a better balance between development and security both by responding effectively to proliferation risks and by reducing unreasonable restrictions, thereby defending the legitimate rights of all countries and developing countries in particular.

At this point, it is particularly important and relevant to ensure that non-proliferation rules are fully and effectively implemented. Certain countries are disregarding questions and opposition and remaining intent on advancing their nuclear submarine cooperation within the context of a so-called trilateral

security partnership. In an unprecedented move, two nuclear-weapon States that are also NPT depositary States have transferred tons of weapons-grade highly enriched uranium to a non-nuclear weapon State, provoking an arms race, fuelling a confrontation between blocs, jeopardizing regional and global security and stability, violating the goals and purposes of the NPT and constituting a grave challenge to the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. We urge the relevant countries to abandon their archaic and narrow geopolitical considerations, honour their own non-proliferation obligations in earnest, revoke their decision on nuclear submarine cooperation and take concrete steps to safeguard regional and international peace and security.

Non-proliferation is a long-term task and an important mission for the international community. The implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) will be a gradual process. We hope that all parties can fulfil their own international obligations, participate actively in international non-proliferation cooperation, jointly strengthen global non-proliferation governance and push for universal and common security. China will continue its efforts and contribution to that end.

Mr. Wood (United States of America): I thank Ambassador Pérez Loose for his informative briefing. We congratulate Ecuador on its chairmanship of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) and Ambassador Pérez Loose on the excellent leadership he has shown during his tenure.

The United States fully concurs with the Chair's assessment that resolution 1540 (2004) remains a vital component of the global non-proliferation architecture for preventing non-State actors from gaining access to weapons of mass destruction. While much progress has indeed been made, we should also highlight the results of the 1540 Committee's comprehensive review, completed on 30 November 2022, which found that gaps in implementation remain. Accordingly, we further welcomed resolution 2663 (2022), which the Council adopted on 30 November to renew the mandate of the 1540 Committee and its Group of Experts. In that resolution, the Security Council also tasked the 1540 Committee and its Group of Experts with increasing their outreach to Member States and other stakeholders in order to address those gaps, including by hosting open consultations with all States Members of the United Nations and other stakeholders and encouraging States to develop voluntary national action plans and

participate in voluntary peer reviews. We look forward to actively participating in the Committee's efforts to pursue that outreach.

Another key feature of resolution 2663 (2022), intended to encourage implementation, is the sharing of technical guides that States may find useful when implementing resolution 1540 (2004). The United States fully supports making such information available so that Member States can draw on it, and we look forward to participating in upcoming discussions on the topic. We also look forward to improving transparency in the 1540 Committee by adopting much-needed updates to its internal guidelines to account for and describe the activities to be undertaken by the Committee's Group of Experts, as required by resolution 2663 (2022). The Group of Experts is one of the most effective tools at our disposal in supporting the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), and it will be crucial to clarify its responsibilities so it can engage fully in the activities that are clearly outlined in the Committee's mandate.

The possibility that weapons of mass destruction may be acquired and used by terrorists or other non-State actors remains one of the greatest threats we have to international peace and security. Resolution 1540 (2004) is one of the few established, authoritative international instruments in place to address those threats, and the 1540 Committee remains a vital tool for ensuring that the resolution and its implementation are as strong and effective as possible.

Mrs. Shino (Japan): I would first like to thank Ambassador Pérez Loose and his team for their strong leadership and tireless dedication to the work of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004). Our appreciation also goes to the Group of Experts.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) to non-State actors continues to pose one of the most significant threats there is to international peace and security. The risk has been magnified by rapid advances in science and technology and the increasing accessibility of dual-use technologies. Resolution 1540 (2004) is a vital component of the global non-proliferation architecture as the first international instrument that deals in a comprehensive manner with preventing non-State actors from acquiring weapons of mass destruction.

Japan highly values the work of the 1540 Committee and its Group of Experts in assisting Member States

to take concrete actions to fully implement resolution 1540 (2004). However, there remain significant gaps in implementation among Member States that require our continued attention and effort. There is much more that the Committee can do.

In that context, Japan welcomes the recent successful elaboration of the programme of work, which now becomes a road map to guide the Committee's future work and outlines important Committee activities, including the elaboration of a multi-year programme of outreach and the review of internal guidelines regarding the Group of Experts.

Ensuring the non-proliferation of WMDs requires an all-stakeholders approach. Japan therefore welcomes the open briefing to be held later this year and looks forward to further discussions in an open and transparent manner with the broader membership and international, regional and subregional organizations.

The Committee and its Group of Experts must be empowered to be able to proactively provide their expertise to support Member States in identifying key gaps and obstacles and preparing their national implementation action plans.

Japan has actively contributed to promoting resolution 1540 (2004) and assisting with its implementation. For many years, Japan has shared its expertise on non-proliferation regulations and measures with our fellow Member States through our outreach programmes, with a particular focus on the Asia-Pacific region, which has become a production and distribution hub in the global supply chain and is at greater risk of being targeted by non-State actors.

A recent example is the regional meeting in Tokyo for stakeholders, organized by the Government of Japan and the Office for Disarmament Affairs, to support the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) in Asia. Member States had an opportunity to hold a dialogue with South-East Asian countries and other international partners on match-making solutions for supporting the universal prevention of the proliferation of WMDs.

In addition, for almost three decades, Japan has hosted the Asian Export Control Seminars, where representatives of export control authorities from the region come together to exchange knowledge and experiences to better tackle the proliferation risks of WMDs. Furthermore, Japan played a significant role, through its financial contributions, in appointing

the first 1540 Regional Coordinator in the Asia-Pacific region.

Japan is committed to playing an even more proactive role in enhancing the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) in order to prevent the most dangerous weapons from falling into the hands of non-State actors, including terrorists.

Ms. Jacobs (United Kingdom): I would like to start by thanking the Permanent Representative of Ecuador for chairing the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) and recognizing the invaluable work of the Group of Experts supporting the Committee's work.

Resolution 1540 (2004) remains an essential part of the international disarmament and non-proliferation architecture. It protects all States from the use by non-State actors of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and the means of delivery of such weapons. We welcome the continued commitment by all Member States to the aims of the resolution and to fully delivering its ambition. The use of weapons of mass destruction and the illicit acquisition and transfer of goods and knowledge by terrorists or other non-State actors remains a grave threat to peace and security, as we have seen with chemical-weapon use attributed to Da'esh by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the United Nations.

As we look ahead we must focus on maintaining the relevance of resolution 1540 (2004). That should include further outreach to Member States so that they can improve their understanding of their obligations, while paying greater attention to proliferation financing and greater support for States that ask for assistance in implementing resolution 1540 (2004). We should also step up our efforts to understand how rapid advances in science and technology are changing the context in which States implement the resolution.

The United Kingdom remains committed to supporting Member States in their implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). We recently supported its implementation in the Pacific Islands and worked with partners to raise awareness of proliferation financing in South-East Asia. We can provide legal and regulatory expertise, as well as broader support, to States looking to meet their obligations, strengthen their national regulatory frameworks and improve their ability to implement their laws and regulations governing chemical, nuclear and biological activities.

Mr. Polyanskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I would like to thank the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), Mr. Hernán Pérez Loose, for his substantial briefing on the work of this subsidiary body of the Security Council and on the Committee's plans for the future. In that regard, we are pleased to note the adoption of its programme of work up until January 2024. We trust that, under the chairmanship of Ecuador, the Committee will manage to successfully achieve its goals in the allotted time.

We are convinced that, for that purpose, it is necessary to continue to maintain a constructive atmosphere of cooperation in that subsidiary body and to improve its work in order to achieve concrete results within the framework of the implementation of the 1540 Committee's mandate. In that regard, we note the unanimous adoption last year of resolution 2663 (2022), on the extension of the mandate for 10 years, which confirmed its key elements and outlined a range of issues facing the Committee. We emphasize among them the coordination of efforts to provide countries, upon request, with technical assistance in the processes of implementing resolution 1540 (2004) at the national level in order to facilitate the resolution's full and successful implementation by all countries.

The Russian Federation remains committed to the aims and objectives of resolution 1540 (2004), which remains the only universal international instrument in the field of the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) that requires States to establish effective national control systems in order to prevent WMDs and their means of delivery from being acquired by non-State actors.

We highly value the spirit of global cooperation in the document, as well as the ongoing recognition of the importance of the document for the international community, consistently shored up by practical steps by Member States to implement the resolution. We are convinced that the key to the success of the work of the 1540 Committee should also be its attitude of respect for all States Members of the United Nations and the consideration of their interests and needs as much as possible.

Mr. Nanga (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank His Excellency Ambassador Hernán Pérez Loose, Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the United Nations and Chair of the Security Council

Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004). I also express my thanks for Mexico's excellent work throughout its chairmanship.

My country takes note of the twentieth programme of work of the Committee, covering the period from 1 February 2023 to 31 January 2024, and wishes Ecuador every success. The Committee can count on Gabon's support throughout its mandate.

Resolution 1540 (2004) is an essential part of the global non-proliferation architecture, which seeks to prevent non-State actors from acquiring weapons of mass destruction, with devastating consequences.

In line with the obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and all its safeguards agreements, as well as the Pelindaba Treaty, which establishes a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa, my country supports the Committee's mandate and takes a keen interest in the attainment of its noble objectives.

In that regard, we welcome the efforts made by States to strengthen measures to prevent non-State actors from manufacturing, acquiring or transferring nuclear, chemical or biological weapons.

The strengthening of technical assistance to States is an essential element in order to promote the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), in conjunction with international, regional and subregional organizations. The current global security context, marked by an increasing nuclear threat, serves to reinforce the relevance of resolution 1540 (2004).

Mr. Hauri (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Hernán Pérez Loose, Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) and Permanent Representative of Ecuador, for his briefing, and I congratulate him on his appointment to that role.

Resolution 1540 (2004) is a key pillar of the international non-proliferation architecture. In that regard, we welcomed the adoption last year of resolution 2663 (2022), as well as the renewal for 10 years of the mandates of the Committee and its Group of Experts. The fact that the Committee was able to adopt a programme of work for the first time in three years is a positive development. As the comprehensive review on resolution 1540 (2004) pointed out, while there has been steady progress in the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), its full implementation

remains a long-term task. We therefore need to focus our attention on implementation. Let me highlight three priorities in that regard.

First, submitting national reports provides a solid basis for advancing implementation. We encourage the eight States that have not yet provided initial reports to do so. We recognize the importance of international assistance, both in the submission of national reports and in the broader implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). In that regard, Switzerland reiterates its standing offer of assistance, as presented on the Committee's website.

Secondly, awareness-raising activities with regard to resolution 1540 (2004) are important to disseminate information about its content and thereby bolster its implementation. We welcome the Council's decision to develop a multi-year outreach programme for States. Based on the status of implementation outlined in the comprehensive review, the programme should help to establish a plan and prioritization framework that will cover national, regional and international events, including activities organized by the Committee, while also affording to the Committee and its Group of Experts the necessary flexibility to exercise its mandate.

Thirdly, the Group of Experts is a key tool of the Committee to advance the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). Acting under the Committee's supervision, the Panel is fully engaged in all its activities, which include providing international assistance and outreach. It is therefore important to ensure that the appropriate framework conditions exist for the Group of Experts and for the Committee to review its internal guidelines that concern the Group.

Resolution 1540 (2004) is a key element of the international non-proliferation regime and is complemented by other efforts. Multilateral export control regimes round out that framework, providing a balance between non-proliferation concerns and international cooperation. As an active participant in those mechanisms and as current Chair of the Missile Technology Control Regime, Switzerland is committed to their implementation and development. As those instruments have developed guidelines for their application, we believe that the experiences gained, which are in the public domain, can feed into the discussion on the development of technical guidelines for the 1540 Committee.

Ms. Kesse Antwi (Ghana): I would like to begin by thanking Ambassador Hernán Pérez Loose, Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), for his briefing. Ghana acknowledges with appreciation the progress made in the work of the Committee since last year.

Global interest in the use of chemical, biological and nuclear technology for peaceful development uses will forever be marred by the risks of accidents and proliferation owing to the dual-use nature of those technologies. For that and many other reasons, the role of resolution 1540 (2004) as an important means of preventing the proliferation of chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons and their means of delivery from falling into the hands of non-State actors, such as terrorists, remains pivotal in the international non-proliferation and disarmament architecture.

Ghana values and remains committed to the work of the 1540 Committee. The resumption of most of the Committee's work with the easing of coronavirus disease pandemic restrictions therefore came as a great relief to us. We welcome the submission of national action plans by three States, increasing the total number of such plans to 38, and we further encourage States that have yet to submit theirs to do so. We are confident that the twentieth programme of work of the Committee, covering planned activities for outreach, assistance, transparency and cooperation with international, regional and subregional organizations, will further accelerate the Committee's goal for the full implementation of the resolution by Member States.

We are particularly keen on the inclusion in the programme of work of the Committee's agenda to review existing initiatives available to strengthen, on request of States, the capacity of their points of contact to assist in the implementation of the resolution. We believe that engagement with points of contact will, among other things, further increase awareness and provide Member States whose focus may be otherwise further away from, or those who may be worried about the dissemination of, weapons of mass destruction with a better appreciation of what the resolution seeks to achieve.

The Committee's work illustrates the impact and importance of engagement and outreach. We are optimistic that the Committee's sustained work will yield significant progress in the submission of voluntary national implementation action plans by States.

While national ownership is undeniably central to the implementation of the resolution, experience-sharing, including through voluntary peer reviews, presents important means for encouraging States to develop their own voluntary plans. In that regard, we believe that maintaining an inclusive process that benefits from collaboration with relevant international, regional and subregional organizations and other United Nations bodies as part of outreach activities is important.

Rapidly evolving technologies, as seen, for instance, in the case of nuclear science and technology, serve to reinforce the common refrain that the full and effective implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) is a long-term task. Consequently, the Committee has its work cut out for it in its important role in facilitating assistance to Member States to fulfil their obligations under the resolution. In that regard, we welcome unanimous adoption of resolution 2663 (2022), which extends the mandate of the Committee for a period of 10 years.

In conclusion, we commend the Chair of the 1540 Committee and his team for the diligent and inclusive manner in which the Committee's affairs are conducted. We are also encouraged by the hard work and persistence of his fellow members of the Committee and remain immensely appreciative of the support of the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Group of Experts in their joint efforts to assist the Committee in carrying out its mandate.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Mozambique.

I thank Ambassador Hernán Pérez Loose, Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), for his briefing on the 1540 Committee's activities and his leadership of the Committee.

Let me begin by stating our support for the Committee's programme of work for the period from 1 February 2023 to 31 January 2024. I also strongly reaffirm Mozambique's commitment to global efforts against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

Importantly, resolution 1540 (2004) identifies terrorists and terrorist groups as key non-State actors who may acquire, develop, traffic in or use weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. Zero

tolerance should apply to supporting non-State actors in any shape or form in the development, acquisition, manufacture, ownership, transport, transfer or use of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their delivery systems.

We note with satisfaction the successful completion of the comprehensive review of resolution 1540 (2004) with the involvement, through open consultations, of international, regional, subregional organizations and relevant civil society organizations.

We welcome the increase to 142 in the number of Member States that have submitted information on their focal points for resolution 1540 (2004) and encourage the resumption of training courses for regional points of contact as soon as the circumstances allow.

Providing technical assistance to States is critical to the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). However, we remain concerned that, during the reporting period, none of the remaining eight States submitted the first national reports with information on measures taken to fulfil the obligations of resolution 1540 (2004).

The international community must continue to make efforts towards non-proliferation in a context where technological advances are proving challenging,

with non-State actors and terrorists in particular more likely to acquire weapons of mass destruction, materials and related technologies. In that context, all States are encouraged to implement effective non-proliferation measures, including relevant internal controls.

As part of the commitment and importance attributed to global non-proliferation efforts, in 2021 Mozambique presented its first national report, with information on the measures taken to fulfil its obligations under resolution 1540 (2004).

Finally, we reiterate our support for the ongoing work of the Committee and our expectation of working closely together. We extend our thanks to the Vice-Chairs, the Group of Experts, the staff of the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs for the excellent work done so far and in the hope of carrying out more productive work.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

The meeting rose at 4.20 p.m.