Opening Remarks

By

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Regional Workshop on
Sharing Effective Practices, Revitalizing Assistance, and Developing Future Strategy

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Deputy Minister Shin, Ambassador Oh, excellencies, distinguished guests.

I am honoured to have this opportunity to address this Regional Workshop on the implementation of Resolution 1540, as we mark the resolution’s 10th anniversary.

I commend the Government of the Republic of Korea not just for organizing this event, but also for its longstanding support for international cooperation in halting the global proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. It is fitting indeed that the Chairman of the 1540 Committee would come from the Republic of Korea.

Your country and the United Nations have worked together for many years in disarmament and non-proliferation, and my Office for Disarmament Affairs is grateful for the generous assistance you have provided for our own work in these fields. During a meeting last May under the presidency of the Republic of Korea, the Security Council reaffirmed that the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery constitutes a threat to international peace and security. The Council also stressed that it remains gravely concerned by the threat that non-state actors may acquire such weapons.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon stated¹ that in the decade since its adoption, resolution 1540 has become an important component of the global security architecture. He urged all States and stakeholders to reaffirm their common commitment to implement this resolution and to devote their utmost efforts to save present and future generations from the threats posed by terrorism and weapons of mass destruction.

I would like now to survey some of UNODA’s activities in assisting the implementation of this resolution in three key areas: facilitating national implementation; enhancing cooperation between international, regional and sub-regional organizations; and building effective partnerships with key stakeholders including civil society and industry.

**Key area 1 (national implementation).**

National implementation remains the cornerstone in the 1540 architecture. In cooperation with the 1540 Committee and international, regional and sub-regional organizations, UNODA is actively assisting Member States in this area.

My Office has developed a module of a “1540 country-specific dialogue” that includes national round tables and bilateral consultative meetings. These activities are implemented in cooperation with relevant regional and sub-regional organizations. UNODA gives special attention to these tailored dialogues with Member States to facilitate the preparation of voluntary national implementation action plans as encouraged by Security Council resolution 1977 (2011). We have worked with OSCE and OAS in co-organizing several country-specific activities that have assisted in the development of such plans.

We have also developed the 1540 Peer Review, which is intended to enable interested Member States, in cooperation with the 1540 Committee, to conduct bilateral exchanges on practical implementation experiences, applicable effective practices as well as to compare national procedures, regulations and laws related to the 1540 implementation.

¹ The Secretary-General’s messages on the tenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1540 are available at UNODA website: http://www.un.org/disarmament/WMD/1540/
Our work has been guided by Security Council resolution 1977, which requested the 1540 Committee with support of its group of experts to identify practices, templates and guidance, and to use this compilation in preparing a technical reference guide. We launched a project to hold regional and/or thematic seminars to identify such practices based on practical experience of States or relevant international, regional and sub-regional organizations.

**Key Area 2 (enhancing cooperation between inter-governmental organizations).**

While national efforts remain the most important, multilateral organizations have much to contribute in 1540 implementation.

Security Council resolution 1977 encouraged the 1540 Committee to enhance cooperation and information sharing with international, regional and sub-regional organizations on technical assistance in implementing resolution 1540. UNODA promotes such cooperation by working with these organizations to exchange information and identify synergies that can enhance implementation.

In December 2010, we worked with the Government of Austria in organizing the first meeting of such organizations to cooperate in promoting the 1540 implementation, which was attended by representatives of 25 multilateral organizations. A follow-up meeting of the relevant Secretariats was held in Vienna in February 2012.

From 7-11 April 2014, UNODA, in cooperation with OSCE, convened a series of meetings in Vienna to provide an opportunity for the relevant Secretariats to exchange information and address some important issues including, technical assistance programmes and the identification of effective practices. As a result, a network of organizations has been established to facilitate the sharing of information, lessons learned and the identification of assistance requirements and programmes for the benefit of their Member States.

**Key Area 3 (and building effective partnerships with key stakeholders including civil society and industry).**

With respect to partnerships, UNODA recognizes the great value of civil society and industry efforts to support the implementation of resolution 1540.

In January 2013, UNODA co-organized with the Government of Austria, the Civil Society Forum, the first major international gathering of representatives of civil society in support of that resolution. It was held in Vienna and involved the participation of 45 civil society groups from the Americas, Asia, Eastern and Western Europe, the Middle East and North Africa and Southern Africa.

As a result of this meeting, a network of representatives from civil society who deal with 1540 issues worldwide has been established to facilitate cooperation, the exchange of views and information sharing. Since the Vienna Forum, it is encouraging to see increased number of 1540-related events organized by NGOs, think tanks and academia as well as their more frequent attendance of 1540-focussed events worldwide.

I would also like to emphasize the importance of contributions by industries in this collective effort. They have the technical expertise, equipment and know-how to enable
practical work on many of these required measures. With this in mind, UNODA together with the Government of Germany initiated the “Wiesbaden Industry Process,” stemming from the first 1540 Industry Conference held in Wiesbaden, Germany, in April 2012.

Based on its successful outcome, continued efforts are being undertaken by UNODA to develop a long-term sustainable cooperation between the United Nations and the private sector in support of resolution 1540.

We have, for example, cooperated with the Union of Arab Banks in organizing a special session devoted to resolution 1540 during the International Arab Banking Summit in Vienna in June 2013. Our close cooperation with civil society is illustrated by the joint publication of the “1540 Compass” journal with the Center for International Trade and Security of the University of Georgia, USA—a unique source of information on 1540 implementation from a practitioners’ point of view.

My Office also recognizes the importance of building a comprehensive security culture to serve WMD non-proliferation goals. We understand that the human factor is crucial in day-to-day implementation of resolution 1540. The 2012 Seoul Nuclear Security Summit specifically recognized that “investment in human capacity building is fundamental to promoting and sustaining a strong nuclear security culture” and encouraged all stakeholders to fully commit to enhancing security culture.

**Conclusion.**

My purpose today has been to describe some of the ways that the UN is supporting the 1540 resolution and the role of Member States in identifying the next steps to implement it. I have no doubt that the UN will try to be more proactive over the years ahead in supporting Member States in this area.

If we are successful, we will have helped States to address one of the gravest shortcomings in international peace and security today. I am referring to the gap between the international commitments of States in disarmament or non-proliferation and their domestic laws, regulations, policies, budgets and institutions to implement them. If we can help in even a small way to bridge that gap and to assist States in ensuring a greater coherency between these goals, we will indeed have accomplished a lot.

For this reason, the UN remains ready to fully support Member States in implementing this resolution and thereby in serving the wider security interests we all share.