



**Implementing United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540
(2004) through Secure Trade and Investments: Promoting
Economic Growth and Building Safe Societies to Prevent Violence
and Combat Terrorism**

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Organised by the Permanent Missions of Panama and Spain to the United Nations, and the
Organisation of American States

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Excellency, Mr Jonathan Del Rosario, Vice Minister of Government Security, Government of Panama

Ambassador Roman Oyarzun Marchesi, Permanent Representative of the Government of Spain

Ambassador Laura Flores, Permanent Representative of the Government of Panama

Ambassador Gonzalo Konke, Permanent Representative of the Organisation of American States

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the Governments of Panama and Spain and to the Organisation of American States for convening this event and for inviting me to speak.

I also want to thank all three organisers for the strong partnerships they have built with the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs on Resolution 1540, including through our regional centre in Peru and our support to the Resolution 1540 Committee.

I am very much impressed by the convening power of Laura and Roman, the passionate Chair of the 1540 Committee, and very happy to see so many Permanent Representatives and other delegates.

For twelve years, Resolution 1540 has promoted legitimate trade and investment by ensuring it is not diverted to malicious purposes.

As Roman emphasised, resolution 1540 is not only a tool to prevent WMD proliferation but also to ensure sustainable development.

Today's event is timely, being held three months before the second Comprehensive Review of the Status of Implementation of Resolution 1540.

The Comprehensive Review is a chance to evaluate whether the current mandate, means of operation and support structures are appropriate in a fast evolving security context.

I know that in completing the Review, Ambassador Oyarzun and the 1540 Committee, as well as its experts, have taken many issues into account. Roman and I have been acting as a dynamic duo in many places, be it in the Security Council and General Assembly in New York, and a number of other cities, including Madrid and Boston this coming Friday. Today, I want to highlight three issues.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

The first issue I want to raise is the changing threat and risk environment. The risks of vicious non-state actors using chemical, biological, radiological and even nuclear weapons are growing.

The 30 August report by the United Nations-Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons Joint Investigative Mechanism found that both state actors and non-state actors had used toxic chemicals as weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic.

The possibility of a biological attack is a particularly worrying and increasingly likely prospect. Yet the international community's investment in preventing and responding to this threat is the inverse of its potential damage. The International Atomic Energy Agency is responsible for addressing radiological risks and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons for chemical risks. However, a biological incident would cause much greater harm than a chemical or radiological one, but has no independent institutional capacity.

We all witnessed the human suffering caused by the West African Ebola outbreak. Imagine the horror that could be unleashed by a similar pathogen designed to cause maximum harm.

Second, there is a growing nexus between CBRN security, terrorism and emerging technologies, including information and communications technologies. Rapid technological evolution is changing the world. New advances in information technology, artificial intelligence, unmanned vehicles and 3D printing are transforming the face of manufacturing, healthcare and transportation.

Unfortunately, the possibility that these technologies could also be misused cannot be ignored. The same technologies could significantly multiply the effects of CBRN devices.

As our world becomes increasingly connected and networked, vulnerabilities are increasing. A cyber-attack by a non-state actor on critical infrastructure such as a nuclear power plant could cause a so-called 'security Fukushima'. There have already been repeated attempts to hack nuclear power facilities and this scenario must be prevented.

Ensuring the peaceful use of cyberspace and, particularly, the intersection between cyberspace and critical infrastructure, must be a priority. The international community needs to step up its efforts to expand common ground and build global norms and rules.

To ensure the economic and developmental benefits of this technological revolution are fully realised, their risks must also be mitigated.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

The third issue is the need to step up capacity-building to facilitate implementation of Resolution 1540.

Many States still lack the capacity to implement the legislation and other instruments. The developing world – from the South Pacific and Africa to the Caribbean – must be a priority. The Africa Union Review and Assistance Conference on the Implementation of Resolution 1540 showed how regional States are willing and how donors can be correctly matched with needs.

I encourage States to build on this example and use the Comprehensive Review as a platform to fill the growing financing gap, including through the 1540 trust fund. In this way, States can both build capacity and encourage good governance.

Success in this endeavour requires the full partnership and engagement of the entire international community – from academia to industry and between international, regional and sub-regional organisations.

UNODA is enhancing cooperation with international, regional and sub-regional organisations to exchange information and identify synergies. OAS and CARICOM have been important partners.

Reaching out to industry is also critical. After all, the private sector has an equal stake in making sure goods and services are not diverted for illicit purposes. It is also industry that has the technical expertise, equipment and know-how to enable practical work on many of these required measures.

UNODA, in cooperation with the Government of Germany, has initiated the so-called “Wiesbaden Industry Process”. The Process is designed to offer a cooperative forum for relevant industries, associations and companies to share their experiences and effective practices with the 1540 Committee.

Building on the success of Wiesbaden, UNODA is developing initiatives for long-term sustainable cooperation with the private sector. I am pleased to note that, as we speak, the first ever regional industry outreach conference on resolution 1540 is being hosted by the Republic of Korea in Seoul.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen

I would like to finish by looking at an issue related to but beyond the scope of Resolution 1540. For twelve years, the resolution has proven to be an effective prevention tool. But in today’s security environment the international community must also turn its mind to what will happen if prevention fails.

This is a reality we need to be prepared for, yet we still have much work to do. The threat and risk is rising but our investment in response, especially for biological threats, has yet to match it. If we fail to act now we will only have ourselves to blame.

We have not much time to act. The consequences of inaction are far greater than the cost of action now. I count on all stakeholders – member states, international and regional organisations, civil society, academia and the private sector – to continue their good work in

preventing a WMD attack, but also to start work now on building robust response mechanisms.

The stakes are simply too high not to.

I thank you so much.