
UNSCR 1540 Ten Years On: Challenges and Opportunities

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Introduction

The UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1540 (UNSCR 1540) on 28 April 2004 to combat non-state actor involvement in the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). In the resolution's first decade considerable resources were expended at the state level on developing national legislation, building capacity in export and border controls, and on other aspects of its implementation. On 7 May 2014 more than 60 countries reaffirmed strong commitment to UNSCR 1540 at a Security Council debate marking its 10th anniversary. However, considerable challenges remain if full implementation of the resolution is to be achieved by 2021: the deadline that the President of the Security Council has called for.¹

With the purpose of exploring what has been achieved and what remains to be done in order to realize full implementation of UNSCR 1540, Chatham House and Project Alpha of King's College London, in partnership with the UN Office of Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) and with support from the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, hosted an event on 5 November 2014, titled '1540 Ten Years On: Challenges and Opportunities', with over 100 international participants.

Several themes emerged in discussions at the event. They included progress made in national implementation of measures specified by UNSCR 1540; monitoring the implementation of the resolution; the challenges associated with national reporting requirements; synergies with other non-proliferation mechanisms; the role of the UNSCR 1540 Committee and its Group of Experts; the role of industry; and preventing non-state actor involvement in WMD proliferation.

This event summary addresses the challenges and opportunities associated with all of these themes. It also considers the role of civil society in furthering the implementation of UNSCR 1540. The summary concludes by setting out considerations associated with the question of whether full implementation can be achieved by 2021.

The Purpose of UNSCR 1540

UNSCR 1540 was adopted in 2004 under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which deals with threats to international peace and security. Amid rising concerns about both the role of non-state actors in state proliferation and the threat of WMD terrorism, its binding nature aimed to galvanize international action against WMD threats.

Resolution 1540 is also concerned with the role of non-state actors in proliferation by states. It is a broad resolution covering most aspects of proliferation: export controls, border security, and, in relation to WMD, transportation and the provision of services storage, among other issues. In fact, there are 12 operational paragraphs in the resolution which collectively require states to enact more than 200 specific measures. Several participants suggested that the recent narrative around UNSCR 1540 dwelt too much on its countering terrorism aspects at the expense of its primary non-proliferation focus. Indeed, a recurring theme at the conference related to utilization of synergies between implementation of UNSCR 1540's requirements and those of other non-proliferation measures, including non-proliferation treaties, multilateral export control regimes and UNODA sanctions resolutions – all of which often require states to implement similar measures.²

¹ Ambassador Oh Joon, 'Statement by the President of the Security Council,' 7 May 2014, available from http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/PRST/2014/7, accessed 29 December 2014.

² It should be noted that obligations under UNSCR 1540 are not to conflict with the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), or Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Indeed, there is a tendency to view UNSCR 1540

The meaning of ‘full implementation’

When the current mandate of the 1540 Committee expires in 2021, UNSCR 1540 will have been in place for 17 years. In this context, the May 2014 call for ‘full implementation’ by 2021 led to a discussion at the conference about the meaning of these words. It was suggested that 17 years was sufficient for all states other than those facing the most trying of circumstances to enact the resolution’s requirements if they were committed to doing so.

Defining full implementation is inherently difficult. As the resolution’s requirements are multi-faceted, a broad approach is required in its implementation. Full implementation is a long-term task and there is no ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach. It may also be that the requirements of implementation will change as new proliferation challenges emerge. More generally, it should be remembered that the resolution’s operational paragraphs are a means to an end rather than ends in themselves. As such, full implementation may demand that states engage in the process of countering proliferation challenges rather than implementing a narrow list of policies or procedures.

States should not all have to implement UNSCR 1540 in the same way for full implementation to be achieved. States that do not manufacture or hold WMD-relevant materiel, for example, will require less stringent laws, regulations and enforcement processes than states possessing nuclear/biological/chemical (NBC)-related programmes or NBC-related export industries. For states less involved in the NBC industries, implementing UNSCR 1540’s requirements may be met through adopting transit and transshipment controls.

It is important to recognize that adoption and enforcement of laws are not the only sufficient criteria for achieving UNSCR 1540’s objectives. Instead, the goal of full implementation may be better understood as the development of comprehensive security cultures grounded in appropriate laws.

Whatever the definition of full implementation, it appears unlikely that UNSCR 1540 will be fully implemented by 2021. This is a result of several factors. Most obviously, many states face more immediate humanitarian concerns, and implementation of UNSCR 1540 is viewed as a lesser priority. That is not to say that these states do not value the goals of the resolution. Indeed, it was suggested at the conference that the opposite is true. Rather, many states still lack the bureaucratic and economic resources to fulfil their obligations, as will be discussed below.³ Additionally, non-state actor involvement in proliferation has proven to be very dynamic in nature, with new individuals, routes, and entities emerging after enforcement action has been taken.

Progress in UNSCR 1540’s first decade

UNSCR 1540 seeks to counter the global threat of non-state actor involvement in WMD proliferation through national implementation of laws and related measures. The complexity of this task should not be underestimated. Nonetheless, in the decade since the resolution was adopted, progress was made in implementing its requirements. More than 90 per cent of states have reported the steps that they have made towards implementing the resolution to the 1540 Committee, suggesting that in these states notable progress has been achieved. Of course, this reporting rate – while high – provides only limited insights

as a complementary implementation mechanism to the BWC and CWC. As UNSCR 1540 backs up and strengthens other regimes, it also provides a basis to galvanize support for countering WMD proliferation because of its universal nature.

³ A particular border between two African states was used as an example of just how ineffectual many frontiers remain. Not only was the bureaucratic and physical infrastructure wholly insufficient to deal with the volume of traffic transiting the official checkpoint, but there was also an unguarded road linking the two states directly adjacent to the one containing the border checkpoint. Border control points such as these are ineffective monitoring points for many goods, let alone proliferation-sensitive and controlled ones.

into the status of the resolution's implementation. Indeed, it was suggested that states often 'under-report' their implementation activities because of the complexity of the activity, as well as the time and resources required to provide a comprehensive report.

Despite imprecise reporting of national implementation of UNSCR 1540, participants were positive about ongoing work at the regional and national level to promote implementation. For example, UNODA has supported regional dialogues as a way of investigating assistance requirements. This regional approach has had success: reporting from African states has increased thanks to dialogues in the continent. It was suggested that partly as a result of this work, UNSCR 1540 is now seen as a cooperative instrument with a direct benefit to African states as opposed to an instrument imposed on poorer states by wealthier ones.

Voluntary additional measures by states can help secure external support for implementing UNSCR 1540. National action plans provide a practical strategy through which states can improve implementation of the resolution by leveraging external assistance programmes. Despite this, action plans are voluntary, and the number published to date is still low (currently, only 13 states have submitted action plans to the Committee). Country visits by the 1540 Committee, such as those undertaken in 2014 in China and the United Kingdom, may also serve to bolster political commitment on the national and international level.

Overall, while the mood at the conference was positive, it was clear that there is much work still to be done. Doubts still exist over whether full implementation of the resolution can be achieved by 2021.

Opportunities and challenges

National implementation of UNSCR 1540's requirements

Adopting appropriate national laws is a vital aspect of adherence to the requirements of UNSCR 1540, though this can be challenging for states. The consensus at the conference was that while there is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach, legislative guides such as that prepared by VERTIC can provide a useful baseline for states needing to build legislation regarding non-proliferation controls.⁴

Questions remain regarding to the scope and nature of the legislation needed to meet the requirements of the resolution. Should states adopt a comprehensive law covering all aspects of UNSCR 1540? If so, should the law also cover the requirements of other Security Council non-proliferation measures, such as sanctions resolutions on Iran and North Korea, which are also binding on all states? Should laws place equal emphasis on facility protection and transshipment if the country does not manufacture or possess WMD-usable materials?

Some debate exists over the merits of legislation versus regulations. In the United States, for example, the Export Control Act was succeeded by an executive order after its expiration. Pakistan, by contrast opted to institute an export control act when it adopted its own laws in the early 2000s. There appear to be advantages and disadvantages to both approaches. It could be that executive-issued regulations provide a quicker route through which to implement non-proliferation controls, and that they are more easily modified as technology and conditions change. At the same time, national legislation can carry greater legitimacy and support.

The arduous process of drafting and adopting legislation requires sustained political commitment. To help sustain this political commitment, drawing upon lessons from the Nuclear Security Summit process,

⁴ See VERTIC, Legislative Guide to National Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004), available at <http://www.vertic.org/pages/homepage/publications/special-publications.php>.

it was suggested that consideration should be given to how heads of state could best engage with the 1540 process. It was also suggested that further outreach activity should be conducted with parliamentarians.

Despite the challenges associated with the adoption of laws, it was noted that considerable progress has been made since UNSCR 1540's adoption in 2004. Notable examples include Malaysia and the UAE, which previously served as key nodes of the AQ Khan proliferation network, and both of which have adopted comprehensive export control laws in the last decade. The success of countries like Malaysia and the UAE can provide encouragement to and models for other states, although it is recognized that the laws should be adapted to the specific needs of individual countries.

Once a state has developed legislation or regulations to meet the requirements of UNSCR 1540 they then face the real challenge – legal implementation. Here it is important to identify which parts of the bureaucracy are responsible for the implementation of national policies. In the case of one country, it was suggested that a 'turf war' had broken out between different ministries as to who would be responsible for the export control aspects of the law. In that case, responsibility had first been given to the foreign ministry, but the foreign ministry was ill-suited to the implementation of the law as it lacked expertise in the area of trade.

Monitoring implementation and reporting

In order to work effectively towards the full implementation of UNSCR 1540, it is necessary to understand how the resolution is currently being implemented at the national level so as to be able to determine how international resources to aid implementation can be most efficiently prioritized. However, challenges were identified with both of the formal monitoring systems (national reporting and the matrix process) that are used by the 1540 Committee. Conference participants identified this as a current gap in knowledge: some 20 states have not submitted implementation reports to the UNSCR 1540 Committee, and some of the matrices – maintained by the Group of Experts – are around five years out of date.

National Reporting

States are required by UNSCR 1540 to submit national reports on implementation to the 1540 Committee. As mentioned, the reporting rate for submissions is 90 per cent. This is certainly high by UN Security Council standards, with report submission rates for sanctions resolutions being much lower. However, national reporting by states has proven to be of limited value in gauging the status of Resolution 1540's implementation as the format and quality of reports varies considerably.

During the 10th anniversary year, there was a considerable focus on achieving universal national reporting, with some progress being made to increase national reporting rates. However, it was suggested at the conference that the value of reporting as a measure of success is limited. Is it helpful for all states to report if the substance does not improve understanding of how UNSCR 1540 is being implemented? Evidently there is some value in achieving universal reporting: doing so would highlight the legitimacy of the resolution, which is particularly important given the controversy associated with its adoption. It was also suggested that the omission of a national report should not necessarily be interpreted as non-implementation of the resolution or as a lack of support for its ultimate objectives.

The matrix process

Recognizing the limitations of the national reporting system, the 1540 Committee tasked its Group of Experts with preparing their own reports on implementation in each territory against a standardized

template, known as the matrix. The conference was reminded that this is, in fact, the primary task of the Group of Experts, who draft the reports before passing them through the committee to the relevant national authorities for approval.

Challenges associated with this process were highlighted at the conference. One key issue is how to measure compliance, particularly as relevant local information may not be available in an official language of the UN. This leads to the question of how the Group of Experts can reliably gather such information. Another issue relates to timeliness. Presently, all the published Committee-approved matrices are approximately five years out of date. The conference heard that the Group of Experts had missed a series of deadlines to update the matrices – a task that must be completed before the 2016 Comprehensive Review on the status of implementation UNSCR 1540.

It was suggested that many of the challenges in the matrix process were systematic in nature and that it may not be possible to solve these challenges without reform of the Group of Experts or of the matrix process itself. Two suggestions for addressing these problems were:

Decentralization. One of the primary challenges stems from the current centralized approach to the matrix process. Presently, the nine members of the Group of Experts are tasked with completing matrices for all the UN member states. It was suggested that involvement of regional staff would help to address the systematic challenges of the matrix process in a variety of ways. There are many possible options for implementing a decentralized approach: for example, it could involve appointing regional representatives of the Committee, or mandating civil society organizations to provide input on the matrix process in specific regions.

Involvement of civil society. It was suggested that civil society could provide valuable information to help complete the matrices. The adoption of such a decentralized approach would allow for both more efficiency in the maintenance of the UNSCR 1540 matrices – and possibly for more accuracy, if quality controls were also implemented. Project Alpha at King's College London is experimenting with a crowdsourcing tool to enable this decentralized approach. Consideration must be given, however, to how best to ensure the quality of the data gathered through a decentralized process.

Implementation of either approach is not without challenges. A decentralized approach would require careful management to ensure that assessment standards are maintained, for example, and involvement of civil society in the matrix process might be resisted by some even if the Group of Experts and national authorities maintained the ability to validate submitted information. What is clear is that the present matrix process is failing. A systematic change will be required if capacity-building assistance is to be effectively prioritized in UNSCR 1540's second decade.

UNSCR 1540 and synergies with other mechanisms

The core objective of UNSCR 1540 is to prevent non-state actor involvement in WMD proliferation. The resolution supplements a wide range of other tools contributing to this objective in other capacities, such as treaties and conventions, export control regimes, sanctions, and the Nuclear Security Summit process. Indeed, at the conference, it was suggested that UNSCR 1540 is increasingly being viewed as one of the four main non-proliferation instruments, alongside the NPT, the CWC, and the BWC.

The relationships between UNSCR 1540 and the various export control regimes, and between UNSCR 1540 and UN sanctions resolutions, provoked much discussion at the conference. It was apparent that more could be done to leverage synergy between these mechanisms.

Export Control Regimes

UNSCR 1540 requires states to have in place an effective system of export controls. This, along with its universally binding nature, makes the resolution a natural complement to the main export control regimes, such as the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), which are voluntary in nature.

It is clear that there are many further synergies that can be leveraged between UNSCR 1540 and the export control regimes. Many countries do not have a control list on relevant goods and technologies, for example. Additional areas where synergies may be found include the promulgation of effective practices and the sharing of information from regime members with non-regime members. This could take place through a mechanism facilitated by UNSCR 1540. On this latter point, it was highlighted that both bodies often wish to conduct outreach on related areas to the same states but that coordination on outreach does not presently occur.

There are challenges in drawing synergies between the export control regimes and UNSCR 1540. However, the view at the conference was that these could be overcome with relative ease if stronger working links could be created between the regimes and the 1540 Committee or its Group of Experts.

UN sanctions and UNSCR 1540

At the conference, some practitioners emphasized that UNSCR 1540 is not a sanctions resolution. The purpose of making this point was to avoid stigmatizing 1540 with the separate issues associated with UN sanctions, which are often viewed negatively by states. Nonetheless, some contributors suggested that implementation of UNSCR 1540 would enable a fuller implementation of sanctions measures.

In discussing opportunities for synergy between UNSCR 1540 and UN sanctions in the context of this suggestion, it was apparent that there are several substantial opportunities to improve the implementation of both sets of regimes through closer cooperation. For example, capacity-building efforts to strengthen the implementation of sanctions resolutions often do not link this work with improved implementation of 1540, and vice versa.

Other equally important points of overlap between sanctions and UNSCR 1540 may be less obvious. For example, sanctions resolutions on Iran and North Korea provide for associated panels of experts mandated to investigate possible violations of the sanctions regimes. The sanctions panels also conduct ‘national visits’ to improve understanding of the implementation of the sanctions. This information, if appropriately captured, could inform prioritization of capacity-building and assistance efforts provided under the UNSCR 1540 mechanisms. There are practical challenges here, however. At present, the interpretation of UN rules is that states provide information under a sanctions regime only for the purpose for which it was requested (i.e. in relation to the enforcement of sanctions), thus imposing a barrier to information sharing. The ongoing ‘High Level Review’ of UN sanctions may help to address such information barriers to some extent.⁵

⁵ High Level Review of UN Sanctions, ‘Latest Reporting Session’ available from <http://www.hlr-unsanctions.org/>, accessed December 29 2014.

Another issue relates to control lists. As mentioned above, UNSCR 1540 does not suggest a list of technologies that states should control. UN sanctions resolutions typically do, drawing upon the lists of the various export control regimes.⁶ This could set a precedent for linking the control regime lists to the requirements of UNSCR 1540.

Exploiting synergy between these mechanisms fully may be difficult to achieve. Certainly there are sensitivities and controversies associated with sanctions. It is desirable to avoid entangling UNSCR 1540, which enjoys broad support among most states, with these issues. Ultimately, it will be the members of the 1540 Committee and the Security Council, to which the Committee reports, that will have to take the decisions on how and to what extent synergy should be pursued. However, it would be a failure of the 2016 Comprehensive Review if novel ideas on how to exploit synergy were not given consideration.

Role of the UNSCR 1540 Committee and the Group of Experts

As discussed above, the conference provided a timely reminder that the primary role of the Group of Experts is to maintain the country matrices. A review of the matrix structure has been completed, but the group missed its deadline for updating the matrices, most of which are now about five years old. It was suggested at the conference that this raises the question of how effective the 1540 Group of Experts actually is.

The role of the Group of Experts has evolved since its inception. Therefore, it is valid to consider whether its current role and structure best reflects the needs of the Committee in working toward the target of full implementation of UNSCR 1540's requirements by 2021, as a part of the Comprehensive Review.

Different models for the Group of Experts were explored. One option that was suggested was to decentralize the experts (currently based in New York), so that it would be easier for the Group to support and monitor 1540 on a regional basis. Another option would be to have 'associate experts' who could represent the Committee at regional events. A final option would be to employ more New York-based experts. A combination of these options could also be considered. Overall, where possible, the Committee and its Group of Experts should focus more resources on national visits and on the development of national action plans. It was noted that such work by the Committee had resulted in the submission of at least one national action plan from Africa.

Capacity-building and assistance

The scope and complexity of UNSCR 1540 makes it challenging to implement at the national level, so third-party capacity-building and assistance will be vital to achieving the goal of full implementation.

Many states may have effective practices to share. For example, states that do not have experience producing chemical, biological or nuclear material might nevertheless have experience tackling illicit trafficking which they can draw upon for implementation of UNSCR 1540.

It was suggested at the conference that the 1540 Committee and its Group of Experts was not playing a sufficient role in coordinating national capacity-building efforts. No clear solutions to this challenge were identified other than by building stronger links between the Committee and the various capacity-building donors. With this in mind, it was suggested that capacity-builders could also help coordinate capacity-building assistance, particularly after the completion of the 2016 Comprehensive Review.

⁶ For example, sanctions on Iran and North Korea both reference different versions of the control lists of the NSG and Missile Technology Control Regime.

In addition, while conference participants recognized that the website for the UNSCR 1540 Committee contains information on the implementation of the resolution, they noted that it offers little information on the types of assistance offered to states and organizations. A review and increase of the information provided could bolster the role of the Committee as a matchmaker between states that want assistance and those able to provide it.

Civil society can play a greater role in implementation, particularly as ex-government officials, academics and experts from industry have a good knowledge of implementing export controls. One problem is that dialogue with civil society groups is only possible with the consent of states. Some states specifically request that the UNSCR 1540 Committee should not engage directly with civil society. The role of civil society may also vary across states and across regions. While civil society in some states tends to be a strong independent voice with its own resources and expertise, this is not necessarily true in the Global South, where 1540 implementation is weakest. This could pose a challenge to the usefulness of civil society in supporting regional implementation.

Finally, social media is a tool through which both states and civil society can advance implementation. There are currently approximately 300 different social media platforms, and many can be used to share implementation assistance, best practice, and success stories.

Working with and informing industry

UNSCR 1540, while recognizing the primacy of the state in adopting laws within its jurisdiction, is intended to affect the actions of non-state actors. As such, the resolution requires states to find ways of working with and informing industry. Both UNSCR 1540 and UNSCR 1977, which in 2011 extended the mandate of the 1540 Committee (to 2021), accepted the vital role of industry, especially the usefulness of dialogue and the sharing of effective practises.⁷ Industry outreach is a key pillar of modern and effective export control systems and can play a ‘multiplier role’ in ensuring 1540’s effectiveness. The good practice guide for corporate social responsibility in supporting international WMD non-proliferation efforts submitted by the United Kingdom to the NSG in 2013 provides suggestions for how industry can be engaged in non-proliferation.

Industry outreach represents fertile ground for strengthening UNSCR 1540’s implementation. It was highlighted during the conference that there are currently 112 countries that report performing no outreach to industry relating to UNSCR 1540.

Raising industry awareness on issues covered by UNSCR 1540 is nonetheless inherently challenging. Any individual could become involved as an intermediary in a transaction intended for proliferation-related uses. There are also hundreds, if not thousands, of companies that deal in or hold proliferation-sensitive technologies. Differences exist across states and regions. But it is still important to engage all industry sectors rather than just those that possess sensitive technologies. This includes the service sectors, such as shipping, finance, and insurance, along with academia – whose role in implementing UNSCR 1540 was considered to be poorly understood at the conference.⁸

⁷ For example UNSCR 1540 calls upon all states ‘to develop appropriate ways to work with and inform industry and the public regarding their obligations under such laws’, UNSCR 1540, available from [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1540\(2004\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1540(2004)), accessed December 29 2014.

⁸ The role of academia in preventing proliferation was the main topic of discussion during a separate event organized by King’s College London and held on 6 of November 2014. Titled ‘Preventing Proliferation Through Intangible Technology Transfer And Balancing Academic Freedom and Non Proliferation: A Role for UNSCR 1540’.

At the conference, it was suggested that there was a need to focus on leverage points when seeking to raise awareness among industry on its obligations under UNSCR 1540: points at which a modest effort can realize a significant increase in awareness of trade-control requirements.⁹ For example, the financial services sector, which has been impacted by substantial fines for failing to comply with sanctions measures, was identified as an example that can be used to promote compliance, among other industry sectors. The primary reason for this, it was suggested, is the role that the financial sector plays in enabling other types of commerce. Similarly, it was suggested that the insurance sector has a role in setting the ‘global risk landscape’, by deciding what types of policies can be issued. Engagement of these sectors could result in a substantial contribution to the aims of UNSCR 1540, provided that consideration is given to how they can most effectively contribute.

It is also important to think about implementation across particular industries. The Wiesbaden Process, organized by the German government in partnership with UNODA and with funding from the United States and European Union, works to facilitate dialogue between the UNSCR 1540 Committee and industry. It is through such dialogue that the Committee and its Group of Experts can consider issues pertaining to industry’s implementation of UNSCR 1540 on a trans-country basis.

Preventing non-state actor involvement in WMD proliferation

The purpose of UNSCR 1540 is to prevent non-state actor involvement in proliferation. It is therefore appropriate to ask whether this has been achieved as a result of the resolution.

Non-state actor involvement in proliferation has continued throughout the decade in which UNSCR 1540 has been in effect. Iran’s nuclear and missile programmes have advanced by procuring goods through non-state actors. North Korea and Pakistan have similarly relied on non-state actors for their illicit weapons programmes. Moreover, terrorist organisations, such as the so-called Islamic State, have also expressed interest in obtaining WMDs and currently control border areas necessary for trafficking.

Despite these challenges, UNSCR 1540 can be judged a success by other metrics. No terrorist group has obtained or used WMDs. No new AQ Khan network has emerged to supply client states with the building blocks for WMD programmes. While other measures have doubtless contributed to these counter-proliferation successes of the last decade, the resolution has had some success in controlling the spread of weapons-usable goods and making it increasingly difficult for states and non-state actors to acquire materials for illicit weapons programmes.

Conclusions: UNSCR 1540 Ten Years On: Challenges and Opportunities

In 2021, UNSCR 1540 will have been in force for 17 years. It is apparent that if full implementation – however defined – is to be achieved by that point, a substantial amount of work remains to be done.

The conference on 5 November 2014 explored many ways in which UNSCR 1540’s support community can better assist states in implementation of the resolution, but it is apparent that it is only with the commitment of states that the resolution’s objectives can be fully met.

As part of the 2016 Comprehensive Review of UNSCR 1540’s implementation, consideration must be given to how best to work with civil society in implementing the resolution. It should be remembered,

⁹ It was highlighted also that, because the mechanisms through which UNSCR 1540 is implemented are a national prerogative, awareness-raising efforts should focus on promoting adherence to national laws rather than necessarily on raising awareness of UNSCR 1540 and its requirements.

however, that those organizations that have experience in dealing with the UN system tend to be disproportionately influential in that system. Efforts should be made to broaden the scope of organizations with which the UNSCR 1540 committee engages to counter this effect. In particular, there are significant opportunities for engagement on a regional basis.

Nonetheless, while the UNSCR 1540 Committee's current mandate ends in 2021, work to implement the resolution will not end at this date: even if full implementation of the resolution is realized, states will have to sustain implementation. The requirements of UNSCR 1540 will continue unless revoked by another Security Council resolution, and the norm that has become associated with preventing non-state actor involvement in proliferation will continue.

A final question raised but not answered is what, if any, measures should be taken to enforce compliance with UNSCR 1540 if states have not made progress towards full implementation by 2021? This question will evidently require consideration as the end of the Committee's mandate approaches.

This event was held in partnership with UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Project Alpha and UN Office for Disarmament Affairs

