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UN Security Council
Resolution 1540
Support Unit

1540er

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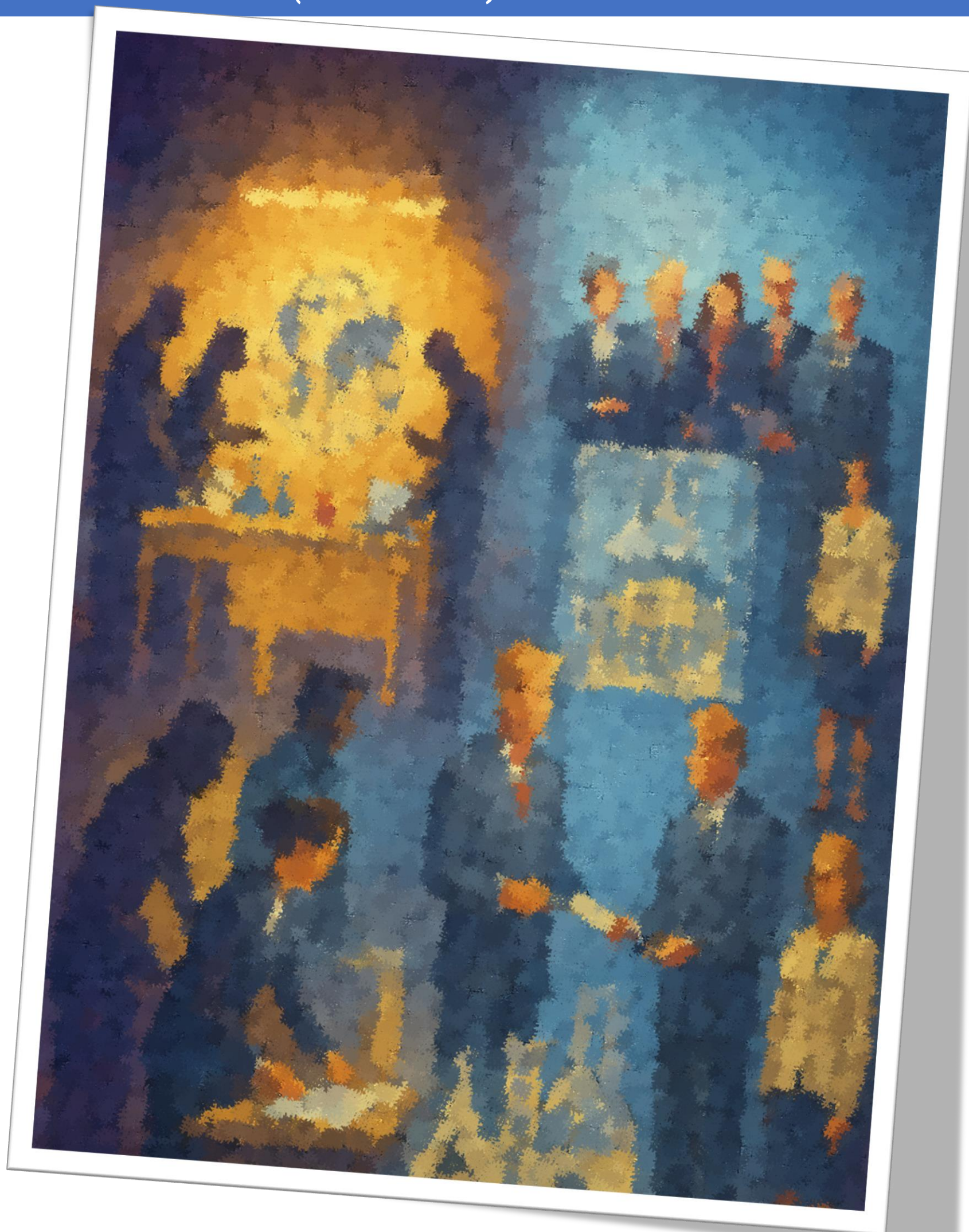
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UNSCR1540- A CENTRAL PILLAR

The UN Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) Support Unit of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) is pleased to publish the **second** issue of “**1540er**”. The **1540er** will be issued regularly throughout the year, providing updates on the key developments on UN Security Council resolution 1540 as supported by UNODA across the globe. The periodical will also shine a spotlight on the implementers of resolution 1540 - 1540ers - and their experience and lessons learned in safeguarding a central pillar of the international non-proliferation architecture.

(Cover image: proliferation of nuclear, chemical, and biological materials and international responses. Generated by AI.)

Spotlight- The High Representative for Disarmament Affairs

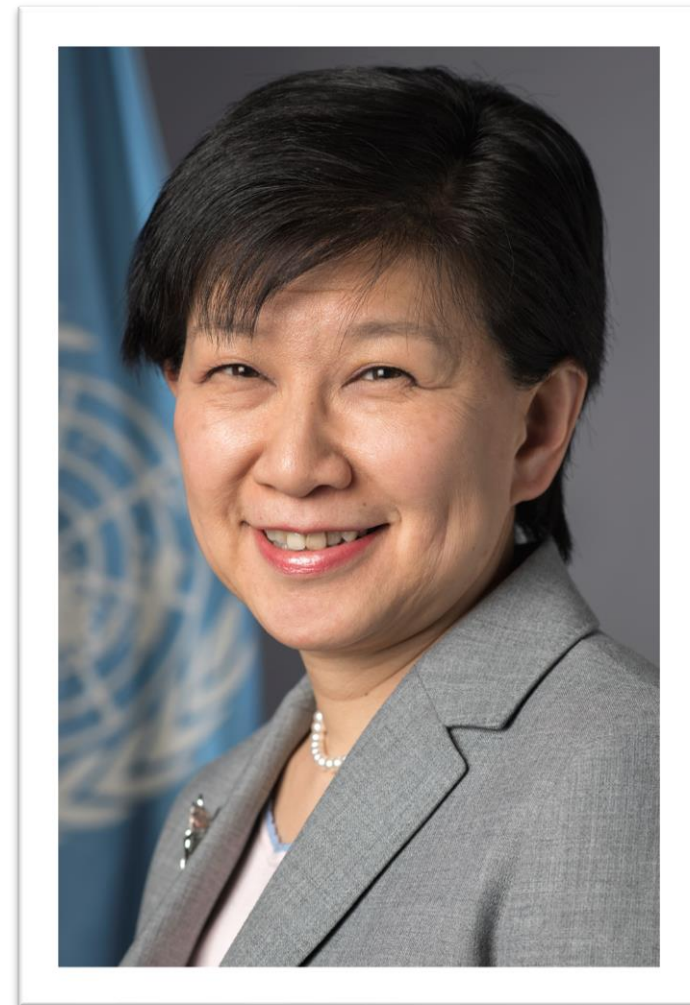
The 1540 Support Unit had an opportunity to have an in-person interview with Ms. **Izumi Nakamitsu**, Under-Secretary General and the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, before the 80th UN General Assembly. She spoke on resolution 1540's unique values and concluded with encouraging messages to 1540ers across the globe.

Q1: You have extensive experience across the UN system in your career so far. How do you connect humanitarian development and peace nexus as a high representative for disarmament affairs?

One of the key approaches being increasingly emphasized across the UN system—particularly in the context of UN80—is the need to break out of fragmented, siloed ways of working. Too often, efforts are confined to narrow mandates, which limits our collective impact. The Secretary-General has consistently highlighted the importance of addressing challenges from a broad, integrated perspective. This principle is reflected in many initiatives across the UN system.

We've seen time and again that when we better connect our tools and approaches—whether in peace and security, development, or humanitarian action—we achieve more meaningful and lasting results. This integrated approach is especially relevant in the field of disarmament. Historically, disarmament has been viewed primarily as a security instrument. But we've learned that spending money and resources military capabilities alone will not guarantee security. However, when appropriate defense measures are complemented by development efforts, the overall security impact is significantly enhanced.

Disarmament also has deep humanitarian roots. More than a century ago, States began recognizing the humanitarian consequences of war and conflict. Even when conflict could not be prevented, there was a shared understanding that armaments should not cause unnecessary suffering or harm to civilians. This humanitarian origin remains central to disarmament today.



By its very nature, disarmament integrates humanitarian concerns. As practitioners, we should consistently consider the humanitarian impact of our disarmament work. Protecting civilians and upholding humanitarian principles are not peripheral—they are foundational to disarmament efforts.

This connection extends to development as well. Particularly in the context of small arms, light weapons, and conventional systems, the well-known phrase holds true: *there is no development without peace, and no peace without development*. Member States subscribe to this: for instance, through the Programme of Action (PoA) on small arms and light weapons, they are actively working to bridge the gap between security and development. At its core, disarmament naturally intersects with humanitarian and development agendas. These are not separate strands—they are historically and practically linked and should be promoted as such by the international community.

Another critical dimension of disarmament, especially in the context of resolution 1540, is that disarmament is a prevention effort. Disarmament is a powerful tool to prevent conflict, arms build-up, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-State actors, including terrorists. It is a cornerstone of the international community's prevention agenda, aimed at averting both conflict and humanitarian crises.

Spotlight-

The High Representative for Disarmament Affairs

Much of the UN's work in disarmament takes place in conference rooms—supporting Member States in developing norms and negotiating agreements. We also play a vital role in building the capacity of States to implement these commitments. But in all of this, we must never lose sight of the why: the ultimate goal is to protect civilians and uphold humanitarian principles.

Q2: You mentioned the disarmament as a preventive tool. In that regard, what do you see as the unique value of Resolution 1540 in contributing to UNODA's overall mandate?

First and foremost, Member States will agree that Resolution 1540 is a key instrument in the overall disarmament and non-proliferation toolbox. It is unique for different reasons. First, this is a Security Council instrument, agreed unanimously.

It provides a mandate that requires all Member States of the United Nations to make sure that they control and prevent the illegal proliferation of WMDs to non-State actors. The creation of this instrument is unique.

And this issue is still a priority for the vast majority of Member States; I would say ALL Member States. They all want to make sure that they have the capacity to implement this Security Council resolution and that is where our support is essential.

1540 is also unique in the sense that States have come up with quite creative, interesting mechanisms to make sure that the resolution gets implemented at a global level. This includes making sure that various capacity building workshops are held in different parts of the region. Resolution 1540 is a key instrument, and everyone really appreciates this.

The making of such efforts is also quite very pragmatic, practical, and non-political. The State's capacities are being built in a framework that implements the mandate laid out in the resolution, such as the development of export controls for WMD-related materials.

So, resolution 1540 is a really unique and creative instrument that was created by the Security Council. It is appreciated by all UN Member States as a pragmatic and practical way of making sure that WMD proliferation to non-State actors will be prevented.

Q3: You attach importance to the challenges and opportunities created by development in science and technologies. In your view, how can ODA bring the implementation of Resolution 1540 ahead of that technological curve?

The developments in science and technology create many opportunities, but managing their risk is a real and growing challenge. These developments pose increasingly complex risks, particularly in terms of proliferation to non-State actors. The barriers to accessing sensitive materials and technologies are steadily decreasing, making it easier for malicious actors to exploit them. As a result, the risks we face are expanding.

The first step in addressing the associated risk is for Member States to be fully aware of its implications. They must engage in practical, informed discussions about the dual-use nature of emerging technologies—understanding not only the risks but also the opportunities - how these technologies can be harnessed to strengthen prevention efforts.

Within UNODA, we have a small but highly capable Science and Technology Unit that closely monitors advances in emerging technologies. Our focus is often on identifying and mitigating risk factors.

But we also recognize the potential of technology to support disarmament and non-proliferation goals. From both perspectives—risk and opportunity—it is critical to stay updated on the evolving impact of science and technology.

Member States need mechanisms and processes to respond to these developments effectively. This is becoming increasingly difficult, especially as technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) intersect with areas such as chemical synthesis and biological research. These intersections could lead to the creation of weaponizable agents, and the accessibility of AI tools means that non-State actors with sufficient resources could exploit them.

Spotlight-

The High Representative for Disarmament Affairs

We must urgently address these emerging threats. I've raised questions about what are the kinds of virtual black markets that could facilitate access to dangerous technologies. Tackling this issue requires collaboration—not only among Member States but also with other UN entities and external partners.

The UN has some capacity in counter-terrorism, and these efforts must be closely aligned with our work in disarmament. Technology experts need to be fully aware of the potential for misuse, and we must ensure that our collective response is proactive and coordinated. Unfortunately, there is no single solution—but we must pursue all avenues simultaneously.

This is a priority concern for many Member States, including those in the Global South. In my conversations with defence officials—particularly in Africa—there is a clear and growing anxiety about the ability of non-State actors to acquire advanced weapons systems, such as lethal autonomous weapons or armed UAVs. The use of technologies like 3D printing in conventional weapons manufacturing further complicates border control and customs enforcement.

Preventing access by non-State actors to advanced weapons is a top-tier issue. Member States must be equipped with the knowledge, tools, and capacity to respond. Strengthening awareness and preparedness around the technological dimensions of disarmament is not optional—it is essential.

Q4: As a human leader in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, have you faced any particular challenges and how do you balance work and family?

The challenges we face in advancing gender equality are largely systemic. Personally, I have not felt particularly disadvantaged as a woman in this field. In fact, especially within the domains of security, disarmament, and non-proliferation, I believe we've made significant progress—thanks in large part to Secretary-General António Guterres, who has made a bold and public commitment to achieving gender parity across the UN system and pursued numerical targets.

He didn't just announce the target. The target is important, but they must be backed by structures that ensure implementation. At the UN, we have a robust system for tracking progress on gender parity. Each year, entities—including UNODA—receive a scorecard that reflects how well we are meeting these objectives. These scorecards are not symbolic; they influence leadership evaluations and drive accountability. This is your scorecard, meaning you're not doing well or you're doing well, you're progressing. If we're not making progress, that will be reflected in my evaluation as a leader.

Last year, UNODA achieved gender parity at all levels. We are no longer operating under disparity—we are now gender equal in representation. But representation is only one part of the equation. The reason why representation is important is also because it also has an impact on the policy side. Representation matters because it shapes policy. At UNODA, we consistently ask: How does this disarmament initiative contribute to gender equality? And conversely, how can the gender equality agenda strengthen our disarmament work? These questions must guide our approach in both directions. Since I assumed this role in 2017, I've seen the UN system actively and seriously engage with these issues.

That's the mindset we must continue to cultivate; gender equality is not just about fairness—it's about improving the quality and impact of our work across the board.



The High Representative speaks on resolution 1540.

Spotlight-

The High Representative for Disarmament Affairs

While I haven't encountered major gender-related challenges in recent years, that wasn't always the case. When I began my career in peacekeeping in 1992, I was the first female professional staff deployed to Sarajevo—then an active combat zone. As the newly appointed head of the UNHCR office, embedded within the peacekeeping mission, I found myself in an environment unprepared for women. There were no adequate facilities, and I was the only woman among military personnel who didn't quite know how to engage with me.

That experience was isolating, but I found ways to persevere—and importantly, I found allies among my male colleagues. That support was crucial. Gender equality must not be seen as a women's issue alone. It is a shared cause, and men have a vital role to play. This is not a zero-sum game. A more gender-equal workplace benefits everyone.



The editor interviewed the High Representative and presented the first issue of 1540er.

Q5: What advice would you give to current and aspirant 1540s, which is the implementers of 1540s?

My advice is also to be creative. Come up with ideas, don't be afraid of creating innovative mechanisms that could be useful for the implementation of this framework. I think it will be increasingly important, precisely because of the technological advance that we talked about. Approaches, processes, and mechanisms that we have been, you have been using so far might not be sufficient in the future, because of various technologies on the horizon.

When that happens, you will need to have that creativity and innovative approaches to be tested. So be creative, try out different mechanisms. I think the history of resolution 1540 has proven that there were some efforts being made. Continue with that creativity and innovation in the instruments.

I would advise that one of the strengths of your work—and that of your team—is the creation of a global network of practitioners, especially through capacity-building workshops held in various regions. I would encourage those practitioners to remain engaged in this network and stay connected with one another. A well-connected community of practitioners can be an invaluable resource, enabling the exchange of best practices and mutual support. When challenges arise, this network can offer insights, advice, and potential solutions drawn from diverse experiences across the globe. So my key advice is: stay connected, be active in the community, and contribute to the network. This kind of collaboration is essential.

My advice is also to be creative. Don't hesitate to explore new ideas or develop innovative mechanisms that could enhance the implementation of the framework. This will become increasingly important as technological advancements continue to reshape the landscape. Traditional approaches may no longer be sufficient, and new technologies will demand fresh thinking and adaptive strategies.

History has shown—particularly through the evolution of resolution 1540—that innovation and creativity have played a vital role. Continue to build on that legacy. Test new approaches, experiment with different mechanisms, and keep pushing the boundaries of what's possible.

UNODA's Support for/ Participation in UNSCR 1540-related Activities

AFRICA SHIELD – 1st Regional Counter-proliferation Workshop in Morocco (4-6 August)

AFRICA SHIELD regional counterproliferation workshop was convened to broaden participants' knowledge of WMD/CBRN proliferation threats, identify regional capability gaps, discuss areas of improvement, and foster networks among African counterproliferation stakeholders. The workshop also served as a valuable platform to promote resolution 1540 as a key pillar of the global non-proliferation architecture.



Workshop on the National Action Plan (NAP) for the Implementation of UNSCR 1540 in Costa Rica (21-22 August)



The workshop gathered a number of national and international representatives.



The perfect support team: Government of Costa Rica, OAS, 1540 Group of Expert, UNODA, donor community

UNODA supported a workshop on the National Action Plan (NAP) for the Implementation of UNSCR 1540 in Costa Rica, organized by The Inter-American Committee against Terrorism of the Organization of American States (CICTE/OAS), with the collaboration of the Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) Programme of the United States. UNODA delivered opening remarks and a presentation on good practices and lessons learned through UNODA's support for the development of 23 NAPs since 2011.



"Knowing that we have the support of UNODA and the committee's experts gives us tremendous motivation to achieve the 1540 PAN's goal by 2026. As Costa Rica meets the international norms established for the control and regulation of strategic dual assets, we contribute to the global non-proliferation mechanism to avoid the humanitarian, political, economic and environmental catastrophe from the use of WMD by non-state actors. Through partnerships nationally with UN instances, regional and sub-regional organizations, our vision is like a prism that only reaches its full brilliance when it reflects a collectively work."

-Marcela Zamora, 1540 Point of Contact, Costa Rica

UNODA's Support for/ Participation in UNSCR 1540-related Activities

Global Trade Conference 2025 in Singapore (27-28 August)



UNODA participated in the Global Trade Conference in Singapore and delivered a presentation on the nexus between trade and security and the specific provisions on border and export controls as stipulated in resolution 1540. This meeting and brought together trade stakeholders and business leaders from the Asian region. They discussed the need to construct resilient supply chains, consider innovative approaches to trade and regulation, as well as forge stronger international partnerships, and robust dispute-resolution mechanisms.

Workshop on the Update of Panama's National Action Plan (NAP) for the Implementation of UNSCR 1540 (15-16 September)

UNODA supported the workshop on the Update of Panama's National Action Plan (NAP) for the Implementation of UNSCR 1540, convened by the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism of the Organization of American States (CICTE/OAS), with the collaboration of the Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) Programme of the United States. UNODA provided both opening remarks and a presentation highlighting the range of support for the implementation of resolution 1540, including sharing good practices and lessons learned on NAP development.



"Panama exemplifies its efforts to preventing the proliferation of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, as well as their means of delivery."
-Opening remarks made by UNODA

National Implementation of resolution 1540

The following States updated their Points of Contact in this quarter- namely **Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Kyrgyz Republic, Latvia, Singapore, United Kingdom, United States, and Uruguay** (in an alphabetical order). National PoCs can be found on the [1540 Committee's website](#).



UNODA's Support for/ Participation in 1540-related Activities

1540 TechHorizon in the United Kingdom (18 September)



Through an inaugural workshop organized by the University of Warwick in collaboration with UNODA, the 1540 TechHorizon initiative was launched focusing on the implementation of UNSCR resolution 1540 in the light of risks and opportunities presented by advanced technologies. The workshop brought together UK-based stakeholders with extensive expertise in artificial intelligence, non-proliferation, arms control, export enforcement, and chemical, biological, and nuclear risk governance. UNODA provided an overview of the current status of resolution 1540 implementation, emphasizing the need to enhance knowledge and capacity, particularly in response to the rapidly evolving technological landscape. Check [UNODA's updates](#).

Southeast Asia Forum on Strategic Trade Management in Indonesia (15-17 September)



This workshop constituted the third activity of its kind since May 2025 in Indonesia to support the country to develop a comprehensive export control system with a view to preventing WMD proliferation and avoid destabilizing and irresponsible transfers of strategic goods. UNODA delivered a presentation on resolution 1540 and export control. This event facilitated further dialogue among the participating entities and produced recommendations that will contribute to the development of an export control system in Indonesia.

Regional Workshop on the Implementation of the BWC in Central Asia and Mongolia in Uzbekistan (23-24 September)

UNODA's Biological Weapons Convention Implementation Support Unit (BWC-ISU), in close collaboration with the Republic of Uzbekistan, organized the workshop, which comprised a set of thematic introductory presentations, including by the 1540 Support Unit, as well as national presentations to inform about the domestic implementation of the BWC and resolution 1540, including their linkages. The workshop gathered 42 participants from Member States and International and Regional Organizations. Read more on the UNODA's [website](#).



Senior Officials Dialogue – Pathways to Strategic Trade Management for Cambodia (29-30 September)

The government of Cambodia convened the dialogue to follow up on the progress made at the UNODA-led 1540 NAP workshop in April that took place in Sihanoukville. UNODA presented on resolution 1540 and export control. Parallel to the main event, UNODA also held bilateral meetings with the Government of Cambodia to discuss its draft 1540 NAP and 1540 National Report. Cambodia has submitted such reports three times, with the [latest version](#) submitted in 2018.



1540ers' Field Trip

UNODA Visited Poster House in New York- “Atoms for War and Peace” (4 September)



UNODA participated in a curator-led tour at Poster House, to explore the exhibition entitled “[Atoms for War and Peace](#)”. The curator, Ms. Angelina Lippert, an expert in corporate propaganda, provided an extensive overview of Cold War-era posters, both promoting and opposing the use of nuclear energy. Her presentation illustrated how, in the late 20th century, the world had seen the potential of nuclear energy and sought to influence public perception through frightening or empowering visual art. The hour-long tour served as a powerful reminder of UNODA’s mandate, which includes the total elimination of weapons of mass destruction, and the critical importance of the international non-proliferation regime, such as resolution 1540, which ensures the inalienable right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy while preventing its proliferation to malicious non-State actors.

A Participant's Thoughts

The private view of the “Atoms for War and Peace” exhibit was very interesting, especially as someone from the UK who grew up with the CND protests. I can well remember “Red Ken” (Ken Livingston, Leader of the Greater London Council who declared “nuclear weapon free London” back in the day), and the “Protect & Survive” booklet, which I can remember being delivered to all homes when it was made public that it existed. I’ve attached a link to a video which was made by the BBC just after “Protect & Survive” came out, and warning its terrifying to watch even after 43 years (I saw it when it was first broadcast in 1982), it made a huge impact on the British public, along with an equally terrifying BBC film called “Threads” which came out in 1984.

<https://youtu.be/wN9il-gMqa4>

On the nuclear aircraft side there is an interesting video, a declassified US Air Force “Secret” film (very much a classic example of a late 1950s/early 60s military project briefing film). It really shows the sheer size of the programme and this was just the manned aircraft one, as there was also Project Pluto part of the US Air Force SLAM (Supersonic Low-Altitude Missile) Programme, and also the nuclear space propulsion programmes (which is my personal favorite as a space geek and as it was a topic that I was involved in with my work with the multilateral export control regimes).

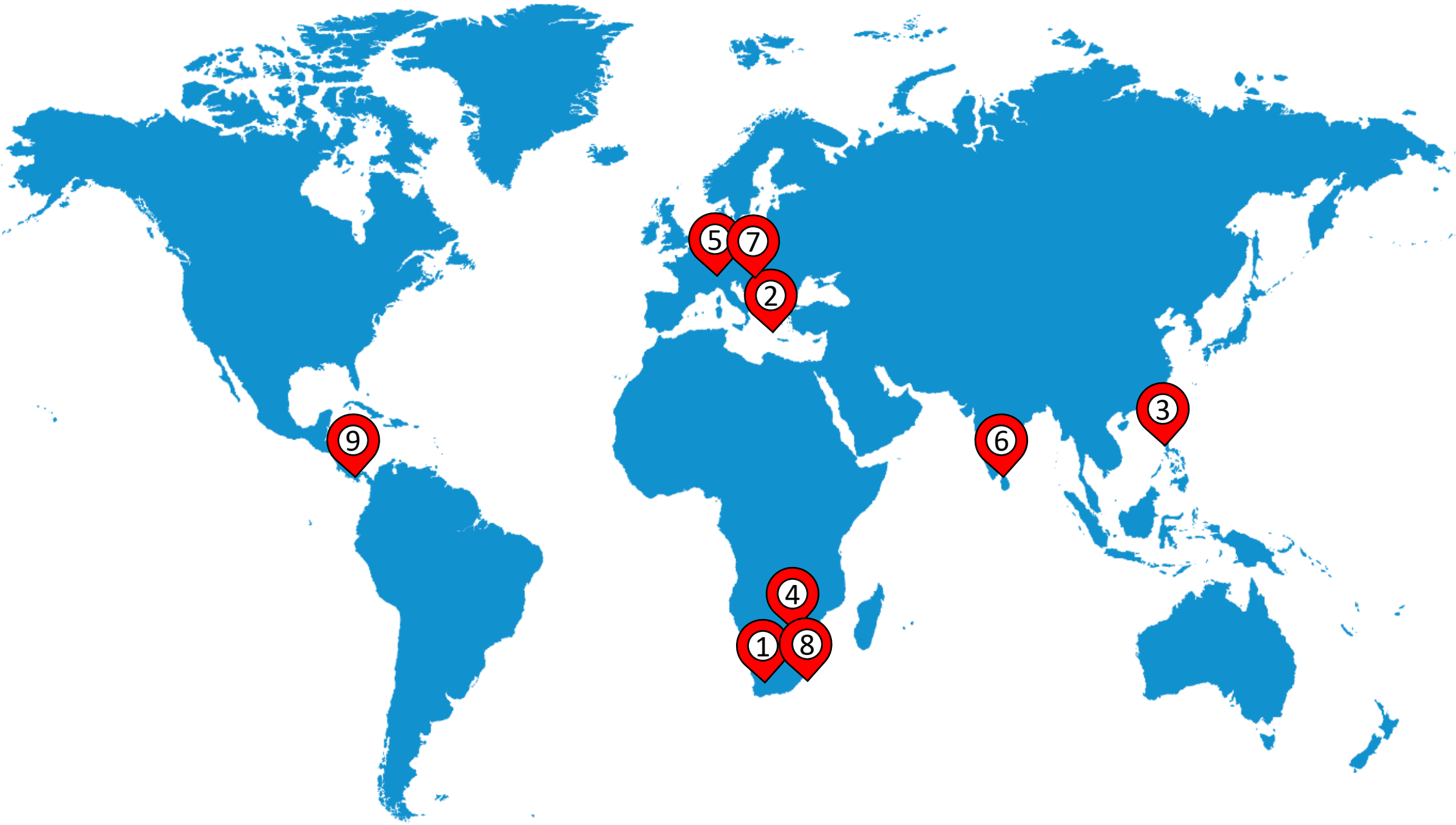
<https://youtu.be/V-8q8lNxQEY>

The whole range of ideas of what nuclear technology could be considered in the 1950s/60s is really interesting, if not bit terrifying.



Upcoming Events and Activities*

- to be organized / supported by the 1540 Support Unit



No	Activity	Date
1	Peer Review: Botswana and South Africa (Pretoria, South Africa)	4-6 November
2	Workshop on Maritime Border Security Enforcement within the Context of Effective Implementation of UNSCR 1540 (Crete, Greece)	11-14 November
3	Erlangen Regional Conference (Manila, Philippines)	14 November
4	Botswana NAP Validation Workshop (Gaborone, Botswana)	18-19 November
5	Erlangen Global Conference (Munich, Germany)	26-27 November
6	Awareness-Raising Workshop for High-Level Officials of Bangladesh, Maldives and Sri Lanka (Colombo, Sri Lanka)	26-28 November
7	Panel Discussion on Educational and Capacity Building Value of UNSCR 1540 (Vienna, Austria)	28 November
8	Regional Workshop on Strategic Trade Management of Dual-Use Goods in Africa (Pretoria, South Africa)	2-4 December
9	Regional Points of Contact Training (Panama City, Panama)	15-17 December

*The events are to be confirmed, and this list is not comprehensive. For any inquiries, please feel free to contact the 1540 Support Unit.

Meet the 1540ers at the 1540 Support Unit/ UNODA



Ms. Xiaohui Wu, Head of the Unit
and Senior Political Affairs Officer



Ms. Amanda Cowl,
Regional Coordinator
for Asia and the Pacific
(based in Bangkok)



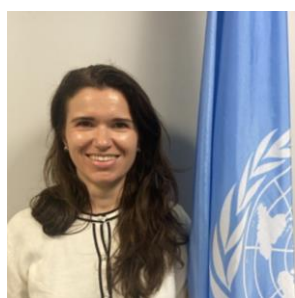
Ms. Einas Mohammed,
Regional Coordinator
for Africa
(based in Addis Ababa)



Ms. Natasha
Carvalho-Malekane,
Political Affairs Officer



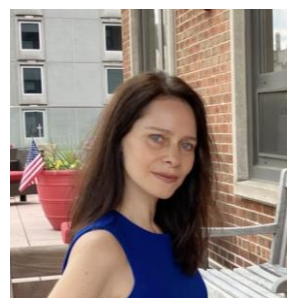
Mr. Chen Wang,
Information Systems
Officer



Ms. Ophelia Zenz,
Political Affairs Officer



Mr. Brendan Farmer,
Administrative Assistant



Ms. Lisa Ivrin,
Administrative Assistant



Mr. Shinichi Hirao,
Associate Political
Affairs Officer
(editor for 1540er)

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The 1540 Support Unit is always grateful for valuable support from all partners. We hope you enjoy reading this periodical, and if you have any feedback or ideas we could cover in future issues, please share with us at:

UN1540er@un.org

UNSCR 1540 Support Unit

UNODA Weapons of Mass Destruction Branch