Madame Chair, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for the invitation to the UN Security Council’s 1540 Committee to participate and speak to this third Meeting of Experts on strengthening national implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC).

At the outset, it is important to acknowledge the significant overlap between the obligations of States Parties to the BWC and the legally binding requirements under UN Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). While their objectives may differ in scope in terms of resolution 1540’s focus on preventing non-State actor proliferation, these international instruments are both complementary and mutually reinforcing. Their full and effective implementation remain key to strengthening the global non-proliferation architecture by curbing the threat posed by biological weapons, their means of delivery and related materials. The UN Security Council’s 1540 Committee, with the support of its Group of Experts, continues to work with States to implement the key provisions of the resolution through appropriate and effective national laws and domestic control measures.

It should be recalled that under operative paragraph 2 of resolution 1540 (2004), States must adopt and enforce appropriate effective laws which prohibit any non-State actor to manufacture, acquire, possess, develop, transport, transfer or use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery, in particular for terrorist purposes. In addition, under operative paragraph 3, States must take and enforce effective measures for domestic controls to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery, as well as controls over related materials. This includes measures to account for and secure these materials in production, use, storage or transport; physical protection measures; effective border controls and law enforcement measures; and export and transshipment controls, including controls over funding and financing. It is evident that if these measures are taken and enforced by States then they are also strengthening their national implementation of the BWC. Likewise, adoption and enforcement of legislation to implement the BWC strengthens implementation of the requirements under resolution 1540 (2004).

Madame Chair, a Comprehensive Review of implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) took place in 2016. In its final report the 1540 Committee observed, in relation to operative paragraph 2, that subsequent to the previous comprehensive review in 2011 there had been an absolute increase of 13 per cent in measures recorded covering the biological weapons-related prohibitions, up to a 62% implementation rate. This compares with an implementation rate of 61% for nuclear weapons-related prohibitions and 74% for chemical weapons. The Committee noted that additional efforts were needed with regard to enforcement measures, namely criminal or administrative penalties, which were in general lower in number than legal

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1 The views expressed are those of the speaker and do not necessarily represent the views of the 1540 Committee.
framework measures for biological weapons. In relation to operative paragraph 3(a) and (b), accounting for and securing materials related to biological weapons, the Committee observed that the overall rate of implementation measures was far less than that for materials related to nuclear and chemical weapons and that there had been no increase in measures by comparison with earlier figures from 2011, with the exception of accounting for transport and for physical protection measures, which showed a slight increase. The Committee was strongly of the view that States should take urgent action to adopt measures to account for and secure materials related to biological weapons. Regarding implementation of operative paragraph 3(c) and (d), the Committee observed that 176 States had adopted a legal framework related to border controls for biological materials while only 103 States had export control legislation to prevent the proliferation of these materials.

In order to improve implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), the Committee has continued to strengthen the components of its toolbox for assisting Member States. This includes 1540 Committee matrices, which the Group of Experts are currently updating in advance of next year’s Comprehensive Review of implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). Earlier this year, the Committee also called on States to submit voluntary National Implementation Action Plans, which are a useful tool for States to identify actions to address any implementation gaps, foster interagency cooperation and identify areas where assistance may be required, as well as initial or additional national reports which provide valuable information on the measures States have taken, or plan to take, to comply with their obligations under the resolution. In order to foster Member States’ capacity to implement their 1540 obligations, the Committee has streamlined the assistance matchmaking process and recently sought updated information from States and international and regional organisations offering assistance, as well as from those States seeking assistance. The Committee also welcomes reports of effective implementation practices. Submissions from States and international and regional organisations related to all components of the 1540 Committee’s toolbox have been posted on our website.

Madame Chair, in order to facilitate national implementation of the key requirements of resolution 1540 (2004), the Committee with the support of its Group of Experts has participated in a number of activities with Member States, in co-operative partnership on several occasions with international and regional organisations. For example, the Group of Experts has conducted a number of trainings in the past year for 1540 points of contact in Africa and from Member States of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), with a further course being planned for the Asia and Pacific Region to be hosted by China in October. These courses, which are led by the 1540 Experts, continue to benefit from the participation and active engagement of representatives from international and regional organisations such as the BWC Implementation Support Unit, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), INTERPOL, the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and others. And of course the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) is a key partner of the Committee.

Madame Chair, given the synergies between the BWC and resolution 1540 (2004), the 1540 Committee and its Group of Experts look forward to continued co-operation with the BWC States Parties and the Implementation Support Unit as we continue our work together to assist States towards the full and effective implementation of their respective obligations.

Thank you.