

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Republic of Suriname in the case of Mass Destruction on Weapons.

Allow me to say that Suriname is not a producer, possessor or trader in nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. Since the adoption of UNSCR 1540 in 2004, Suriname has endeavored to strengthen both laws and practical implementation measures to ensure adherence to the non-proliferation objectives of the resolution.

Mr. Chairman,

Suriname remains firmly committed to supporting the objectives of UNSCR 1540 (2004) and submits this National Action Plan both as a demonstration of this commitment and as a way of charting a way forward for further implementation strengthening initiatives.

The Government of Suriname is still in the process of implementing the UNSCR 1540 and working with states, the 1540 Committee and the technical assistance providers to materialize the National Action Plan.

To further progress, Suriname is in the process of contemplating adoption of chemical Weapons Implementation Bill to implement the country's international chemical weapons-related obligations. In this regard, this Bill would specifically address some of the mandatory obligations contained in the operative paragraphs of the UNSCR 1540.

Mr. Chairman,

The Government of Suriname considers the use of chemical weapons in all its forms a war crime and a crime against humanity, and affirms the need to address the issue in the light of international law, in an impartial and transparent matter. Accordingly, we express concern at the possibility of chlorine gas having been used in attacks against some countries.

In this regard, we call upon the chemical-weapon countries to fulfill their obligations under the terms stipulated by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), to destroy their arsenals within the agreed timeframe. We also call upon all States that may possess chemical weapons to eliminate them and to join the OPCW promptly, without any condition.

Mr. Chairman,

We as a member of the CARICOM also appreciate the international cooperation and assistance provided by OPCW, including through the promotion of events on assistance and protection against chemical weapons, which are convened annually across several CARICOM states. We believe that such initiatives contribute to the promotion of a safer environment in our region.

We share, with many other States, the idea that effective international action against biological threats needs to be universal, legally binding and non-discriminatory. There is a need to design and implement additional measures to ensure effective enforcement of the banning. We therefor also support the prompt resumption of negotiations on a Protocol to the BWC that established an effective verification regime, aiming at universal implementation on the OPCW.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, The Government of Suriname reaffirms that the prohibition of chemical and biological weapons are vital international legal instruments to guide multilateral efforts in the struggle for the total elimination of weapons destruction under strict and effective international control.

Thank you!