

MESSAGE FROM THE ACTING DIRECTOR



ACTING DIRECTOR, UNICRI
Leif Villadsen

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the adoption of United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) (UNSCR 1540), a key pillar of the international security landscape and non-proliferation architecture. When it was adopted in 2004, the resolution formed part of the collective, international response in the face of Abdul Qadeer Khan's nuclear proliferation network and a growing number of terrorist attacks. It aimed to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and their means of delivery by non-State actors.

Today, with rising political instability and global insecurities, the threat of violent non-State actors – especially terrorists and organized criminal syndicates –, acquiring and using nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, as well as their related materials, remains of significant concern. As a result, this landmark resolution continues to play a pivotal role in safeguarding international peace and security.

UNICRI – one of the six specialized research and training institutes of the United Nations – is mandated to advance understanding of crime-related problems, foster just and efficient criminal justice systems, support respect for international standards, and facilitate international law enforcement cooperation and judicial assistance. In line with its mandate, UNICRI contributes to global efforts to reduce the risk posed by WMDs through the wide range of action-oriented research and needs-based initiatives that it implements.

It is within this context that I am delighted, as the Acting Director of UNICRI, to introduce this inaugural issue of the *1540 Compass*. This new e-journal comprises one of the ways in which the Institute is committed to advancing the objectives of UNSCR 1540 and bolstering the global non-proliferation framework. The publication aims to shed light on the impact, challenges and

opportunities of UNSCR 1540, as well as the work of the 1540 Committee. It also seeks to establish a dynamic platform for international dialogue and knowledge exchange among Member States, experts, practitioners, and organizations involved in implementing UNSCR 1540. Moreover, it will enable us to stay abreast of emerging trends, threats and risks. I trust that it will generate informed discussions and actionable insights that can help us forge better collective understanding of the field of non-proliferation as it stands today.

I extend my sincere gratitude to all contributors, readers, supporters and of course the *1540 Compass* editorial team for this shared commitment to advancing the objectives of UNSCR 1540.

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