

Mine Ban Convention
Second Preparatory Meeting – 10 April 2014
Maputo Action Plan

Mr President-designate

Australia would like to commend Mozambique's work in producing a comprehensive draft of the Maputo Action Plan.

The Plan of Action will be the key guide to the Convention's way forward. We recognise the considerable effort to date to incorporate the range of substantive issues that should be priorities in the Convention's implementation. We thank you for continuing to streamline the Action Plan, so that it is concise and clearly identifies the key actions that can be measured and translated into real progress on the ground. Clarity and brevity will guarantee that the Action Plan has a strong impact that can be embraced by all States Parties.

Mr President-designate

We welcome the ambition described in the introduction of the draft Action Plan. In our view, it is important that such ambition:

- is consistent with the time-frames to fulfil obligations provided by the Convention,
- remains grounded in what can be achieved realistically in the five year period following the Review Conference, and
- does not discourage new states from joining the Convention by imposing an aspirational completion date that they may not be able to be adhered to by new States Parties – thereby limiting us from assisting them move along a path of concrete steps towards universal acceptance.

We appreciate the desire for a collective 2025 deadline for meeting the Conventions obligations. However we are concerned that this deadline, even if only aspirational, is quite likely to act as a deterrent to States Not Party, particularly those states that have significant clearance challenges.

The aspirational date would also serve to create a marked difference in the timeframe that is achievable for current States Parties as compared to non State parties who may yet join the Convention. Therefore, Australia suggests that the Action Plan refer and reinforce the commitment by states parties to meet their own individual time-bound deadlines instead of an ambition for a 2025 deadline for all.

Mr President-designate

A realistic and prioritised approach to the challenges that still remain in the post-Review Conference period is important, particularly for mine clearance. Australia agrees that the action points for mine clearance should encourage States Parties to prioritise efforts to:

- quantify, qualify and report in a timely manner on the remaining challenges and assistance needs and incorporate this information into their national mine action and development plans as appropriate,

- ensure that mine action standards are in place and applied including the use of appropriate land release methodologies to identify and refine the areas identified as being contaminated with landmines, and
- provide mine risk reduction and education targeting the most at-risk populations..

Similarly, on mine victim assistance, Australia agrees the action points should encourage States Parties to do their utmost to:

- assess the needs of mine survivors and the availability or gaps in existing services or support
- report on national policies and plans to help enable mine survivors to participate fully and effectively in society on an equal basis to others, including efforts to strengthen local capacities and integrate assistance to mine victims within broader national policies and plans (e.g. in disability, health, education, employment, development and poverty reduction), and
- ensure the inclusion and participation of mine victims in all matters that affect them in this work.

Mr President-designate

There may be many more action points that may be pertinent to mine clearance or victim assistance work. However, if the work on the Action Plan can focus on the highest priorities for the 2014-2019 period, we will have the strongest foundation to deliver real progress towards the goal of a world free from anti-personnel mines - by the time we meet again at the Fourth Review Conference.

We look forward to continuing work on refining this draft Action Plan and offer you our full support.

I thank you