

Mine Ban Convention - Third Review Conference

Implementation Support

Statement by Australia

Mr President

- . Australia acknowledges that the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) has a vital role for helping achieve the aims of the Convention, and all States Parties are beneficiaries of its services.
- . We would like to thank the Director and staff of the ISU for their work and commitment.
 - As we all know, the ISU has, in accordance with its mandate, provided high quality support to our meetings, advice to office-holders, technical support to affected States Parties and promoted the Convention to the international community.
 - Australia also appreciates the support the Geneva International Centre on Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) provides to the important work of the ISU.
- . Australia has been a long-standing voluntary contributor to the financial costs of the ISU, having contributed each year since the decision was made in September 2001 to establish the ISU.
- . We welcome the 12MSP President's efforts, with assistance from the ISU, in ensuring sufficient contributions from States Parties were provided to the ISU in 2013.
 - Twenty-six States Parties contributed to the ISU's 2013 core costs.
 - For this year, however, funds have been received from or committed by only 13 States Parties to date leaving approximately 690,876 Swiss francs still required.
- . On one hand, States Parties understandably desire, as we do, to see that savings and efficiencies be made where possible and that the ISU provides value for money.
 - However, it would be unfortunate if only a small number of States Parties continue carry the financial burden of the ISU's costs, when there are many other States Parties also in a position to contribute.
 - It should not be taken for granted that the ISU will always have the financial resources it needs to continue its important work from this relatively small pool of contributors.
- . Therefore, we support Action #30 in the Maputo Action Plan for all States Parties in a position to do so to provide financial resources for the effective operation of the ISU.
 - We encourage the remaining States Parties which are in the position to make a contribution this year to do so as soon as possible as well as consider contributions in future years in a manner that helps enhance the Unit's flexibility and sustainability.
 - To help share the burden and demonstrate wide ownership of the ISU, every financial contribution, whether small or large, is significant.

Mr President

- . Australia would also like to note the informal Sponsorship Programme, which was established on a voluntary basis by an interested group of States Parties in 2000.
- . At the Cartagena Summit, the States Parties agreed that those in a position to do so would contribute to the Sponsorship Programme thereby permitting widespread representation at meetings of the Convention, particularly by mine-affected developing States Parties.
- . In our capacity as Coordinator of the programme since the Cartagena Summit, and with the valuable support of the ISU and the GICHD, the programme has continued to be both effective and efficient.
 - The ISU has provided sound strategic advice to the programme’s informal donors’ group, while the GICHD has administered the programme at no cost.
- . However, we are concerned that the programme is now receiving funding from an even smaller group of donors
 - In 2013, six States Parties – Australia, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Norway and Switzerland – provided contributions.
 - This year, only three States Parties – Australia, Denmark and Norway – have contracted or pledged contributions.
- . While the programme has effectively re-prioritised within its tighter budgetary situation in order to support sponsorship to the April intersessionals this year and to this Review Conference, the burden of this programme cannot be shouldered by just a handful of States Parties.
- . In 2014, the programme supported the participation of 11 delegates representing 11 States Parties at the intersessionals
 - and in keeping with the commitment at the Cartagena Summit to make use of synergies with other relevant instruments of international humanitarian and human rights law, some sponsorship costs in April were shared with the sponsorship programmes related to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, the Convention on Cluster Munitions and the United Nations Mine Action Programme Directors Meeting.
- . For this Review Conference, the programme was in a position to invite 29 delegates representing 24 States Parties to request sponsorship. This contrasts the 131 delegates representing 109 States which were invited to request sponsorship to the Cartagena Summit.
- . We therefore urge all States Parties in a position to contribute to the sponsorship programme to consider doing so this year and in future years.

I thank you.