

## **President's Statement on the General Status of the Convention**

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**President of the Tenth Meeting of the States Parties**

**20 June 2011**

Excellencies, dear friends,

As the Co-Chairs have noted, it has been our practice that the President provides an overview of the general status of the Convention.

It is my pleasure to do so this year.

Last year when my predecessor Susan Eckey addressed you, she noted that the Cartagena Summit in 2009 had injected new life and energy into our movement.

At the 10MSP in 2010...

- ...we were pushed by the ICBL to “keep up the energy”;
- ...we were inspired by young landmine survivor Daniel Yuval of Israel to remain committed to get rid of landmines;
- ...and we pledged to continue our work to clear mined areas and to assist survivors.

Given what took place at the 10MSP, I ended the meeting by signaling that our challenge is to convert the work carried out in a meeting room in Geneva into concrete action.

In this regard, I am grateful for the efforts that many of you have taken since the 10MSP and for the results of these efforts.

*Universalization:*

With respect to universalisation, it has been our tradition since the 7MSP that the Presidency plays a leading role in promoting further acceptance of our Convention.

My aim as President has been to do the same, working in close collaboration with our good friend Prince Mired of Jordan who accepted my request to again serve as the President's High Level Envoy on the universalization of the Convention.

I will report more on my universalization activities during the next agenda item.

I would remark, though, that with over 80 percent of the world's States having already joined our movement, getting the remaining 20 percent to do so is a difficult task.

All States Parties are committed under the Cartagena Action Plan to "seize every opportunity to promote ratification of and accession to the Convention".

Therefore we all have a responsibility to act.

Similarly, we all have a responsibility to uphold the norms of the Convention and to respond when we witness behaviour inconsistent with these norms.

In the Cartagena Action Plan, we agree that we would "condemn and continue to discourage in every possible way any production, transfer and use of anti-personnel mines by any actor."

It is for this reason that I issued a press release on Monday that would ensure that a message of deep concern about landmine use in Libya would flow from this conference this week.

#### *Stockpile destruction:*

With respect to stockpile destruction, we closed the 10MSP with the States Parties together having destroyed approximately 44 million mines.

But the 10MSP also ended with four States Parties still in the process of destroying anti-personnel mines and with all four having missed their destruction deadlines.

I am aware that progress has been made by each and I look forward to hearing more from these States Parties this afternoon.

Also concerning stockpiles, we agreed in Cartagena that States Parties will, when previously unknown stockpiles are discovered, report such discoveries and destroy these mines as a matter of urgent priority.

In part because of how mine action is helping place a focus on good munitions management, it is possible that unknown stocks could be found.

And, in part because that the world we live in is sometimes a dangerous place, it can be the case that stocks may be seized from criminal organizations or other non-State actors.

If such instances arise, we must act in a practical minded manner and in keeping with our legal obligations, by reporting discoveries of such mines, keeping the States Parties well informed, and destroying these stocks as soon as possible.

#### *Mine clearance:*

With respect to mine clearance, at the 10MSP the Minister of Defence of Nicaragua formally declared completion of Article 5 obligations.

Thus, as of the close of the 10MSP, there were 16 States Parties that had completed implementation of Article 5. Later today, I anticipate that a 17<sup>th</sup> State Party will have accomplished this task.

As my predecessor stated last year, despite these accomplishments, our work to ensure that all mined areas are made safe for normal human activity must continue.

Clarity regarding the remaining task needs to be reported and, based on such clarity, Article 5 implementation plans need to be enhanced. Doing so is consistent with our Cartagena commitments.

#### *Victim assistance:*

With respect to victim assistance, at the 10MSP I made a commitment to make this my priority.



I have attempted to do so through my role as the Chair of the new Standing Committee on Resources, Cooperation and Assistance.

From May 30<sup>th</sup> to June 1<sup>st</sup>, I invited the Convention community to Tirana to take part in an international symposium on cooperation and assistance in the pursuit of the victim assistance aim of the Convention.

I was heartened that approximately 100 experts and States Parties' representatives took part in this event, where we explored in more detail the role of development cooperation in resourcing victim assistance, the importance of but the challenges to strengthening national ownership, and, the important linkages between our Convention and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

I will report more on the Tirana Symposium during the inaugural meeting of the Standing Committee on Friday.

*Other matters important for achieving our aims:*

All that I have mentioned so far concerns the core work of the Convention.

That is, since 2002, we have referred to universalization, stockpile destruction, mine clearance and victim assistance as our core aims.

Other matters, such as implementation support, are important but in a supporting role – supporting the pursuit of the core aims of the Convention.

Given this, it is perhaps a regret that my Presidency has been consumed by matters concerning our implementation machinery at the expense of the focus we need to continue to place on the pursuit of our core aims.

The 10MSP mandated me to carry out important tasks concerning negotiating an amended agreement with the GICHD on the ISU and facilitating an informal process to explore new funding models for the ISU.

These have proven to have been difficult tasks and progress has been slower than anticipated.

While I remain optimistic that we will finalise both matters in fruitful way in time for the 11MSP, I am concerned that sometimes in the context of these

processes we lose sight of why we are here: to assist the victims, to release land from its deadly bondage, to eradicate all stocks of anti-personnel mines and to eliminate all use, production and transfer of mines.

### *Conclusion*

In conclusion, the state of the Convention is good, but we are at a crossroads.

The fulfilment of the Convention's promise – an end for all people for all time, the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel mines – requires us to maintain focus.

Let us not lose sight of what is truly important.

Multilateralism is already littered with ineffectualisms.

We have the opportunity – and responsibility – to ensure that our Convention remains a model of multilateralism working the way it should.

Let us remember, as my successor has, that this Convention has a human face behind it – many human faces.

Let us see that our ongoing efforts this year lead to a 11MSP where a real difference has been made in the lives of these people around the world.