

Notes for ICRC intervention on article 7

Standing Committee on General Status

Monday, 20 June 2011

Thank you Mr. Co-chair,

Submitting an annual report is a legal obligation under the Convention, and one that is essential to help measure and ensure the successful implementation of both the Convention and the Cartagena Action Plan. We would like to commend those States Parties that have submitted regular and detailed reports as well as those States not party that have this year provided voluntary transparency reports. We also would like to commend the outstanding work undertaken by Belgium for many years to increase both the quantity and the quality of article 7 reports.

In our last meeting, Belgium announced that the reporting rate in 2010 was the worst since 2001 and did not reach 60%. This year, the rate of article 7 reports filed so far seems to be even lower. This should be a real concern for all States Parties. We too, like Belgium and the ICBL are concerned about the low level of reporting and agree that it might be time to revitalize this process. It is also essential that the reports submitted be of a standard that renders them a useful tool for the States Parties to measure and assess progress and remaining challenges.

The ICRC welcomes Belgium's initiative to increase dialogue and discussion on how to improve both the quantity and the quality of Article 7 reports. We agree that complete and detailed article 7 reports are an important tool for the mobilization of resources. Donor countries could use it to find a myriad of information and understand better the needs of countries that are still implementing articles 4 or 5 obligations under this Convention. And those countries in need of resources should be using article 7 reports to understand the potential sources of funding and funding cycles for a variety of donors.

Belgium also just proposed to look at other avenues to improve the quality and quantity of article 7 reports. One would be to update the article 7 template and the other to update the guide on reporting produced by the NGO VERTIC. We find the second avenue a particularly interesting one, as many people have probably forgotten about this useful guide. The promotion of an updated version of this guide could improve both the quality and the quantity of article 7 reports.

We look forward to working with Belgium in this endeavor. The ICRC encourages States to support these efforts by engaging in this process with Belgium and by taking all the steps required at national level to submit quality and on-time reports.