

The organisation and functioning of Meetings of the States Parties

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Standing Committee on the General Status and Operation of the Convention

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As the Co-Chairs have recalled, the 11MSP mandated the Coordinating Committee to brainstorm on the organisation and functioning of Meetings of the States Parties in preparation for a discussion by this Standing Committee.

On the basis of this mandate, the Coordinating Committee at its first three meetings this year gave consideration to this matter.

The main conclusion drawn by the Coordinating Committee was that there is general satisfaction with how Meetings of the States Parties are currently organised.

It was agreed that while some improvements could be made, revolutionary change was not required.

Indeed, in many respects, this Convention's Meetings of the States Parties are the model that could be replicated, for example, with respect to the integration of the participation of civil society organisations.

In addition to concluding that there is general satisfaction with the way that Meetings of the States Parties are currently organised, the Coordinating Committee noted the following:

- Firstly, time allocated for individual States Parties to report on progress and challenges encountered in implementation is probably the most important part of the Meetings of the States Parties and logically requires a great deal of meeting time.
- Secondly, while minimising the amount of use of time for general statements could be feasible, eliminating an agenda item for a general exchange of views would not be desirable.

The General exchange of views constitutes a political and diplomatic segment of the MSP that is important to maintain.

A general exchange of views is particularly important for States Parties which participate at a relatively high level and States not parties which may wish to engage in the work of the Convention.

To overcome the constraint of limited time available for the MSP, the President could invite delegations to respect their speaking time and to limit general statements to three minutes.

- Thirdly, when Meetings of the States Parties take place in a mine-affected country, delegates benefit from the opportunity to see the real-life impact of mines and efforts to address these problems. We should continue to take advantage of such opportunities.
- Fourthly, we recalled that different conventional weapons instruments deal with overlapping content.

In this context, we recalled that, at the 10MSP, the States Parties accepted various recommendations.

These included that the States Parties, and in particular States Parties that are party to more than one related instrument, should pursue coherence in the scheduling of meetings, and, that the States Parties should regularly evaluate the potential for synergy in the work of various related instruments, while acknowledging the distinct legal obligations of each.

Consideration of the issue of overlaps between the different conventional weapons instruments remains sensible.

Further discussions are needed to explore the appropriate framework to deal with it given the principles of independence and non-interference between international instruments.

- Fifthly, there may be value in examining how to avoid overlap between MSPs and meetings of the Standing Committees.

In conclusion, the Coordinating Committee, while seeing no need to recommend changes regarding how Meetings of the States Parties are

organised, noted the importance of periodically assessing how the Convention's formal and informal meetings are supporting the implementation process to the greatest extent possible.

Thank you.