

UPDATE ON THE ACTIVITIES AND FINANCES OF THE IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT UNIT

KERRY BRINKERT
DIRECTOR OF THE IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT UNIT

STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE GENERAL STATUS AND OPERATION OF THE CONVENTION 21 MAY 2012

Background:

1. The Implementation Support Unit (ISU) mandate, adopted by the States Parties at the 2010 Tenth Meeting of the States Parties, states that the ISU shall “report in written form as well as orally on the activities, functioning and finances of the ISU to each Meeting of the States Parties or Review Conference, and to informal meetings under the Convention as appropriate.”
2. On 2 December 2011 at the Eleventh Meeting of the States Parties (11MSP), the States Parties approved the ISU’s 2012 work plan and budget. This report is intended to update the States Parties on activities undertaken to date in implementing this work plan and to highlight financial matters.

Activities:

“Prepare, support and carry out follow-up activities from formal and informal meetings under the Convention including Meetings of the States Parties, Review Conferences, Amendment Conferences, intersessional meetings, Standing Committees, the Coordinating Committee and the Article 5 Extension Request Analysing Group”

“Provide substantive and other support to the President, President-Designate, Co-Chairs and Co-Rapporteurs in their work related to all such meetings”

3. The ISU assisted the UNODA Geneva Branch in finalising the Final Report of the Eleventh Meeting of the States Parties.
4. The ISU met on numerous occasions with individual sets of Co-Chairs to assist and advise them on preparations for the May meetings of the Standing Committees and on activities that could be undertaken throughout the course of the year. The ISU provided advice to individual Co-Chairs regarding follow-up on specific decisions of the 11MSP, supported their efforts in preparing discussion papers and assisting in preparing letters addressed to individual States Parties to encourage their participation in the 21-25 May meetings of the Standing Committees.
5. The ISU distributed, on time on 21 March, the Programme and Co-Chairs’ letters for the 21-25 May meetings of the Standing Committees. The ISU followed-up on three occasions to distribute additional background documents.
6. The ISU support preparations for the May Victim Assistance Parallel Programme, including by developing a table listing disability / victim assistance plans that have been developed by affected States Parties, by obtaining copies of plans not already in the ISU’s possession and by developing and distributing a programme and questionnaire.

7. The ISU supported the Co-Chairs of the Standing Committee on Mine Clearance in holding bilateral meetings with numerous States Parties which are in the process of implementing Article 5.
8. The ISU supported the Co-Chairs of the Standing Committee on Cooperation and Assistance by drafting a background on paper entitled "Exploring the options of trust funds to ensure the continuity of resources." In preparing this paper, the ISU liaised with a number of relevant stakeholders, particularly within the UN system.
9. The ISU supported the GICHD on various administrative aspects related to the GICHD's hosting of the meetings of the Standing Committees.
10. The ISU supported the President-Designate of the Twelfth Meeting of the States Parties (12MSP) in the development of initial ideas and a programme for the 12MSP, subsequently distributing, on behalf of the President-Designate, a document for discussion on 25 May.
11. The ISU supported Switzerland in its role as Secretary-General-Designate and host of the 12MSP, including by contributing to an initial meeting with key non-governmental and international organizations to discuss collaboration on an opening ceremony, side events and communications matters.
12. The ISU staged two briefings for the Coordinating Committee to enhance individual members' knowledge and capacity. In addition, the ISU supported four meetings of the Coordinating Committee.
13. The ISU organised and led a briefing on 30 March for the States Parties mandated in 2012 to analyse requests submitted under Article 5 of the Convention. The ISU also supported the Article 5 extensions process by preparing and distributing communications from the Presidency informing the States Parties of requests received and inviting expert input on requests. In addition, the ISU compiled the input provided in order to assist the analysing group with its work. The ISU supported one meeting of the analysing group.

"Provide advice and technical support to States Parties on the implementation and universalization, including on the Sponsorship Programme, of the Convention"

14. The ISU provided advice to all States Parties submitting Article 5 extension requests in 2012. This included the ISU's Mine Action Implementation Specialist carrying out a mission to Southern Africa, which featured visits to both Angola and Zimbabwe with a view to advising these States Parties on the preparation of Article 5 extension requests.
15. The ISU deployed an expert consultant to the Republic of Congo to assist this State Party in better understanding the nature and scope of its Article 5 implementation challenge, in developing a plan to address this challenge and to prepare the ground for an Article 5 extension request, should that be necessary. In follow-up to this mission, the ISU continued to provide advice and to liaise with Norwegian People's Aid on this matter.
16. The ISU began to prepare for engagement of States Parties that will or may need to submit requests in 2013.
17. The ISU provided advice to Niger on reporting as concerns a newly discovered mined area and what Niger intends to do to deal with this.

18. The ISU provided advice to Guinea-Bissau on the completion of its Article 5 obligations, and, in collaboration with Norwegian People's Aid, did the same with respect to Jordan. The Director of the ISU travelled to Jordan to attend Jordan's mine clearance completion ceremony and to advise Jordanian authorities.
19. The ISU's Mine Action Implementation Specialist travelled to Skopje to observe the destruction of previously unknown stockpiled anti-personnel mines by the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and to advise authorities on reporting obligations.
20. The ISU deployed an expert consultant to Uganda to assist Uganda to collect and consolidate information and input necessary to support an assessment of its Comprehensive Plan on Victim Assistance 2010-2014.
21. The ISU advised Tajikistan on ways to ensure that its national victim assistance plan is consistent with Tajikistan's Cartagena Action Plan commitments, the understandings on victim assistance which have adopted by the States Parties and the place of victim assistance in the broader context of disability.
22. The ISU advised numerous States Parties regarding participation in the annual UN Mine Action Programme Directors Meeting, which will take place the week of 26 March. In addition, on the margins of this meeting, the ISU met with three States Parties to provide advice on victim assistance.
23. The ISU provided advice to the Coordinator of the Universalisation Contact Group. As well, the ISU exchanged views on numerous occasions with the Convention's Special Envoy on Universalization regarding efforts he may undertake in 2012.
24. The ISU provided advice to the Coordinator of the Article 7 Contact Group on reporting matters.
25. The ISU submitted a 2011 report, financial projections for 2012-2013 and a proposed set of decisions for the Intersessional Work Programme to the Coordinator of the Sponsorship Programme. The ISU subsequently provided support to a meeting of the Sponsorship Programme Donors' Group and disseminated a summary of the actions taken at that meeting. The ISU also carried out follow-up work on the decisions of the Donors' Group.

“Facilitate communication among the States Parties, and promote communication and information regarding the Convention towards States not Party and the public”

26. The ISU provided advice to one State not party on its accession process and maintained frequent contact with another State not party concerning its ongoing consideration of the Convention.
27. The Director of the ISU wrote to all States not parties to encourage their participation in the 21-25 May meetings of the Standing Committees and to highlight specific opportunities to provide updates.
28. The ISU supported Guinea-Bissau and Jordan in issuing press releases marking the completion of Article 5 implementation by these two States Parties. In addition, the ISU supported the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in issuing a press release highlighting the destruction of previously unknown stockpiles of anti-personnel mines by the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

29. The ISU supported the Presidency in preparing a press releases related to the President's high level address to the Conference on Disarmament on the occasion of the eve of the anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention, on the occasion of the United Nations' international mine awareness day, and related to Syria's new use of anti-personnel mines.
30. The ISU delivered a presentation on the Convention and its implementation mechanisms at the annual workshop convened by the Geneva Forum for new disarmament diplomats.
31. The ISU led a seminar presentation on measuring and assessing the Convention as a success story in disarmament at a Geneva Centre for Security Policy course.
32. The ISU led a seminar presentation on transparency reporting at a GICHD-hosted course on mine action contracting.
33. The ISU continued to update the Convention's website, including by establishing content for the Twelfth Meeting of the States Parties (www.12msp.org). In addition, the ISU continued to maintain the Convention's presence on leading social media.

“Keep records of formal and informal meetings under the Convention, and communicate, as appropriate, the decisions and priorities resulting from such meetings to States Parties and other stakeholders”

34. The ISU continued the effort to ensure that the volume of documents and statements generated at the Eleventh Meeting of the States Parties are made available on the Convention's website and in the Convention's Documentation Centre.
35. The ISU distributed to all States Parties a summary of the actions taken by the 11SMP and a reminder regarding meeting dates in 2012.

“Liaise, and coordinate as appropriate, with relevant international organisations that participate in the work of the Convention, including the ICBL, the ICRC, the UN and the GICHD”

36. The ISU collaborated with the ICBL, UNMAS and the UNODA on “lend your leg for a mine-free world campaign” events. This included by supporting the Presidency's participation in 1 March launch activities and the ISU Director chairing a panel discussion at a 4 April wrap-up event.
37. The ISU met on several occasions with the ICBL, ICBL member organizations and the ICRC to exchange ideas on ways to plan for and ensure the effectiveness of the May 2012 Intersessional Work Programme and to otherwise discuss collaboration on supporting implementation and universalization.
38. The ISU participated in two meetings convened by the Permanent Mission of Austria which brought together all States Parties with victim assistance responsibilities related to conventional weapons instruments, implementation supporters and leading non-governmental and international organizations.
39. The ISU delivered a presentation at the February meeting of the UN Mine Action Inter-Agency Coordination Group on the work of the Convention in 2012. In addition, the ISU participated in the annual UN meeting of mine action programme directors and advisors the week of 26 March, including by deliver a presentation on the work of the Convention in 2012.

40. The ISU continued to liaise with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), including by attending relevant portions of the CRPD's 7th session. In addition, the ISU met with representatives of the UN Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights to discuss ongoing collaboration between the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and the CRPD.
41. The ISU provided numerous inputs to GICHD staff who are carrying out a study on victim / injury surveillance mechanisms. The ISU also provided inputs to GICHD staff involved in a project to examine how data entered into the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) can be better used for mine action planning. In addition, the ISU provided inputs to GICHD staff regarding victim assistance reporting under the Convention as well as under the Convention on Cluster Munitions and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to enable the IMSMA to be used to support various reporting requirements.
42. The ISU provided inputs to GICHD staff who are involved in ongoing efforts to revise the IMAS concerning reporting on mined land released / cancelled through various different means.
43. The ISU supported a GICHD workshop for a visiting delegation from Iran by presenting on victim assistance and on the Convention.
44. The ISU participated in a meeting of the UN's mine action "area of responsibility".

Other matters

45. The ISU's 2012 work plan notes that, in keeping with past practice, the ISU is able to execute other activities, in a manner consistent with its mandate, if additional funds are made available to fully fund these efforts (including funding any additional human resource costs). The work plan further notes that subject to availability of additional funding, the 2012 ISU core work plan and budget may be enhanced and expanded in a variety of specified areas. The work plan states that the ISU will report to, and update, the Coordinating Committee as well as the May 2012 meeting of the Standing Committee on the General Status and Operation of the Convention, on the adjustments that such additional funding may be called for to the core work plan.
46. The ISU received funding from Australia valued at CHF 132,230 which will see the ISU carry out two research projects related to victim assistance. The first initiative will examine the role of mine action programmes and national authorities in victim assistance, particularly with regard to the sustainability of efforts. The second initiative will advance research undertaken by the ISU in 2011 on the role of development assistance in supporting victim assistance.
47. On 3 November 2011, the Director of the ISU presented a draft implementation plan for a possible EU Council Decision in support of the Convention. It was noted that an EU Council Decision was a wonderful opportunity for the ISU to do more of what it is mandated to do. The Coordinating Committee expressed general appreciation for the commitment of the EU to proceed with a Council Decision and to provide the funding necessary to the ISU to implement this decision. In addition, it was noted that the ISU was sensitive to the fact that while this is an opportunity for the ISU to take on additional activity, it must not be a drain on existing ISU priorities and that any additional human resource needs would need to be funded by the EU.
48. In 2012, the ISU continued to furnish information and budgetary projections to the EU in order to conclude administrative arrangements necessary to begin implementation. On 16 May, the ISU Director reported to the Coordinating Committee that discussions with the EU are

proceeding well with a view to possibly beginning implementation of the Council Decision on 1 July. The draft budget includes a provision for funding of a professional officer position for two years to assist in supporting the implementation of the victim assistance portion of the Council Decision. In addition, the draft budget foresees that support would be provided for part-time communications coordination assistance.

Staffing:

49. On the basis of the evolution of discussions with the European Union on the implementation of the EU Council Decision, the ISU will soon proceed with a hiring process for a victim assistance professional officer. Contracts will not be entered into, however, until funding has been contractually secured. Also on the basis of the evolution of discussions with the European Union on the implementation of the EU Council Decision and given the earmarking of the funds expected from Switzerland (i.e., for matters that relate specifically to support to the 12MSP), the ISU has re-engaged Laila Rodriguez to work as a temporary, part-time communications coordinator.
50. Between mid-January and mid-April, the ISU hosted Implementation Support Intern Steven Zoller. In May, the ISU welcomed two new Implementation Support Interns, Maham Syed and Ryan Beech. These interns are hosted at no cost to the ISU.

Financing:

51. To date in 2012, contributions totalling CHF 322,427 have been received from the following States Parties: Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Cambodia, Chile, Denmark and Norway. In addition, a contribution agreement is in place with Australia and a firm commitment has been made by Switzerland which should result in approximately CHF 245,000 being made available to the ISU in 2012. As well, at the 20 April meeting of the Coordinating Committee both Germany and the Netherlands indicated that they would provide funding to the ISU in 2012.
52. The ISU's work plan projects expenditures in 2012 totalling CHF 925,837. Taking into account projected expenditures, the negative carry-over from 2011, and contributions / commitments to date, the ISU still requires CHF 397,670 to fully fund its work plan in 2012.
53. A considerable amount of ISU staff time is being consumed by preparing documentation to obtain funds from interested States Parties and to report on the use of these funds.

ISU Financing 2012

(As of 16 May 2012)

Carry-over from 2011	-CHF39'260
Contributions received 2012	
Albania	CHF1'736
Algeria	CHF5'935
Argentina	CHF5'013
Cambodia	CHF2'975
Chile	CHF27'982
Denmark	CHF47'968
Norway	CHF230'818
Total contributions received 2012 as of 18 April	CHF322'427
Contribution agreements in place / being finalised	
Australia (based on estimated exchange rate)	CHF185'000
Switzerland	CHF60'000
Total contribution agreements in place / being finalised	CHF245'000
2012 projected expenses	CHF925'837
Contributions received / existing+likely agreements / carry-over	CHF528'167
Amount still required in 2012	CHF397'670