

2013 APMB Intersessional Meeting
27-31 May 2013, Geneva

Republic of Palau
Interventions by
Ms. Eunice Akiwo

Standing Committee on Mine Clearance:

As it is Palau's first to address the floor, Palau congratulates the 12 MSP President Ambassador Kovacic for a successful year and to the Co-Chairs, Mozambique and Netherlands, for diligently guiding our discussion.

Palau takes this opportunity to thank its donors, the AP Mine Ban and the CCM for being instrumental in making mine clearance possible and successful in Palau. At the moment, two (2) mine clearance operators are working to clear Palau of the varieties of UXO, including land and sea mines. Palau's mine clearance work faces bottle neck from the government permitting bodies due to lack of Standard Operating Procedures and the technical knowledge to review and approve clearance methodologies. Since 2009 to date, Palau has located and identified 24,513 UXO; removed 23,612; destroyed 22,104; and 1,508 are pending destruction.

Although lacking such vital guidelines, Palau is excited about the mine clearance work on the ground and wish for the clearance to continue. Such direction from our civil society and leaders, Palau's President has enacted a Presidential Executive Order 335 to officially formalize Palau's UXO National Advisory Committee and has tasked the National Advisory Committee to develop UXO National Standards to govern the removal and disposal of the variety of UXO within Palau's jurisdiction. With such Committee in place and shortfall of capacity, Palau continues to appeal to the international community, GICHD and our developing partners for cooperation and assistance toward development of our national mine action standards to guide clearance work and ensure security and safety of the public.

Thank you.

Standing Committee on the General Status and Operation of the Convention: Support of the ISU

Palau shares with this forum that smaller developing affected States highly depend on support and assistance from the AP Mine Ban ISU. Without the support of the ISU, Palau couldn't have initiated its mine clearance or host a Pacific Region UXO Meeting during October 2012 to promote the aims of AP Mine Ban Convention throughout the Pacific Region.

Even with the progress of our mine clearance, Palau still highly depend on ISU support for networking with experts, service providers, donors, completion and submission of Article 7 Reporting and productive participation during Intersessionals and Meeting of the State Parties. The Intersessional Meetings are of crucial importance to support Palau's full implementation of the Convention.

With this said, Palau highly support the AP Mine Ban Convention to maintain its ISU and the Intersessional Meetings because without such support, smaller developing affected States without permanent offices in Geneva cannot on its own fulfill its obligations to the AP Mine Ban Convention.

Thank you.

Standing Committee on the General Status and Operation of the Convention: Compliance

Palau would like to align itself with the statements of Austria, Canada, New Zealand and Norway on Monday and others today. Palau expresses serious concerns about new allegations of the use of AP Mines by Yemen and previously in several other countries; and further condemns any use of AP Mines by any actor at anytime. Palau welcomes the statement of the Ambassador of Yemen saying a thorough investigation will be taken.

Thank you.