

Presentation on Sponsorship Program

Thank you Mr. Co-Chairman. It is an honour and a pleasure for me to be able to represent at this meeting the Group of Donors which supports the Sponsorship Program.

Mr. Chairman and fellow participants, the Sponsorship Program was created in the year 2000 with three broad objectives:

First, to support the participation of State Parties who might not otherwise be able to participate in Intersessional Meetings and Meetings of States Parties.

Second, to support participation of similar States demonstrating a strong interest in becoming States Parties.

Finally, to support the Intersessional program by providing support for the attendance of a number of speakers at each session.

Our priorities were to accomplish these objectives in the most effective and efficient manner for all concerned – the participants, the sponsors, and the administrators of the program.

Mr. Chairman, we believe that we have achieved our objectives, and met our priorities.

At the second Meeting of States Parties in September 2000, 19 participants were sponsored. This rose to 26 at the first Intersessional meeting in 2001, 47 at the second Intersessional, and over 60 at the Third Meeting of States Parties in Managua despite all of the challenges for air travel at that time. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to announce that for this Intersessional Meeting, we have offered support for some 64 participants from 40 countries, and 7 speakers.

M. le co-président, la croissance des nombres de participants a nettement amélioré et diversifié nos réunions. Avec les services d'interprète offerts par l'Union Européen et organisés par Ambassadeur Jean Lint de Belgique, nos discussions sont toujours plus intéressantes et utiles. Je lui remercie de ses efforts à cet égard.

This growth in numbers has created a vastly improved and more diverse participation in our meetings. With the interpretation services that were arranged to be provided by the European Union through the good offices of Ambassador Jean Lint of Belgium, we have seen an even greater improvement in the discussions.

Mr. Chairman, the Sponsorship Program depends on three key groups: first of course are the Donor countries. We began with contributions from Belgium, Canada, The Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. Italy has now also joined the Group and Germany has announced its intention to contribute. I should note that while not part of the program, Austria has also sponsored several delegates.

M. le co-président, le deuxième élément du programme est Le Centre International de Déminage Humanitaire de Genève. Le Centre est responsable de tout l'administration et opération du programme et le fait sans frais au programme. Je dois absolument souligner et rendre hommage aux efforts de Mlle, Catherine Borrero qui s'occupe de tous les éléments, des billets d'avions aux réservations d'hôtels et tous les autres détails grands et petits. Elle le fait d'une manière très efficace et plaisante, et toujours avec un grand sourire. Je vous prie de me joindre en remerciant Mlle. Borrero.

The second pillar of the program is the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining which contributes all of the administrative support for the Program at no charge to the program whatsoever. In this regard, I must pay a special tribute to the work of Ms. Catherine Borrero who works tirelessly and efficiently to make all of the individual arrangements for participants, from airplane tickets to hotels to per diems. I would ask you to join me in thanking Ms. Borrero.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I must thank the participants themselves. We depend on your timely application for sponsorships and your full contributions to the meetings.

Mr. Chairman, the program has now fully utilized the initial funding provided by the Donors I mentioned earlier. I am proud to say that a number of them have already indicated that they will be making additional contributions, and I will leave it to them to announce these as and when they wish. I would note, on behalf of Canada,

a renewed contribution for the coming year of some 80 000 Swiss francs.

I would also call upon all those State Parties in a position to do so to contribute to the Program. New sponsors and renewed sponsorship by the existing Donors are essential for the Program to continue to ensure broad-based participation in the work of the Ottawa Convention into the future.

Thank you Mr. Chairman. I would be delighted to answer any questions, receive any comments, and of course accept any donations now, or outside of this meeting.

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