

VERTIC presentation

‘VERTIC’s Guide to reporting under Article 7 of the Ottawa Convention’

Intersessional Standing Committee Meeting on the General Status and Operation of the Convention

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Thank you Co-Chair. I am very pleased to have this opportunity to report on the completion of VERTIC’s project to produce the ‘Guide to reporting under Article 7 of the Ottawa Convention’.

VERTIC developed this guide during 2001 with funding from the government of Belgium, for which we are most grateful. The guide is intended to assist states parties to the Ottawa Convention to meet their legal obligation to provide transparency reports on their compliance with the treaty as well as any voluntary reporting that they may wish to make. The guide aims to promote clear and full reporting, thereby reinforcing the transparency of state party compliance. It illustrates how the report forms may be completed, including recommendations on the type, format and amount of information which should be provided. The guide should be of use to officials completing the forms and those assembling the necessary information.

VERTIC presented the guide at the Third Meeting of States Parties in Managua, Nicaragua in September of last year. Many states parties made statements at that meeting expressing their support for its use. The President’s Action Programme described it as a ‘valuable tool’ for encouraging compliance with the Article 7 reporting obligation.

The guide is available in both hard copy and electronic formats.

Hard copy versions are available from both VERTIC and the UN. VERTIC produced an English version of the guide in a folder which also holds a CD-rom containing the Article 7 report forms in all 6 UN languages. The UN published the text of the guide as conference document number APLC/MSP.3/2001/INF/1 at the Third Meeting of States Parties to the convention. The United Nations has completed translating this document into the 5 other UN languages. All 6 language versions are now available in hard copy from the United Nations. They are also available electronically on the UN Official Document System (<http://ods.un.org/ods/>). English, French and Spanish versions are also available on the UNMAS E-MINE information resource website www.mineaction.org. They will also shortly be available on the VERTIC website www.vertic.org, the ICBL's Index on Landmines internet database www.icbl.org/index and the GICHD website www.gichd.org.

VERTIC hopes that these translations will make the guide accessible to more people who may find it useful.

Since September 2001 VERTIC has distributed the guide widely among states parties, international organisations and non-governmental organisations involved in mine action. Multiple copies have been sent to the Permanent Missions of states parties in both New York and Geneva, with requests that copies are directed to the relevant personnel in their defence and foreign affairs ministries. For those states parties without permanent representation in New York or Geneva, copies have been sent directly to their foreign affairs ministries. For further distribution to interested parties a large number of copies were sent to the UN Department for Disarmament Affairs, UN Mine Action Service, the Foreign Ministry of Belgium, the Canadian Permanent Mission to the Organisation of American States in Washington, the GICHD Implementation Support Unit, the ICBL Resource Center in Yemen, ICBL in Washington, Human Rights Watch in Washington, and the ICRC in Geneva. VERTIC welcomes recommendations on other potential recipients of the guide and further requests for copies from interested states or organisations. I have additional copies with me at this meeting for those who would like extra copies.

VERTIC is grateful to all those who assisted us in this project and hopes that the guide will contribute to the efforts of the Article 7 Contact Group, and the Intersessional Meeting discussions, in promoting the timely submission of comprehensive Article 7 transparency reports. Thank you, Co-chair, for the opportunity to give this presentation.