

ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION

Standing Committee on the General Status and Operation of the Convention

Evaluation of the Implementation Support Unit

Statement by Australia

Philip Kimpton
First Secretary
Australian Permanent Mission to the United Nations in Geneva

21 June 2010

As this is the first time Australia is taking the floor during this intersessional meeting, we wish to congratulate both Co-Chairs for the assumption of your leadership roles and we look forward to cooperating with you over the course of the meeting.

We would like to thank the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) for hosting our intersessional meetings and to Ambassador Eckey for her presentation on this topic.

Australia commends the Implementation Support Unit for its work to date. The ISU is a valuable resource for the implementation of the Mine Ban Convention and provides high quality services to States Parties.

While we have no major concerns with the ISU's performance, transparency or accountability we do see merit in a review of the ISU mandate and functions to assess current demands and capacity. We note that the ISU has grown since its inception, in part due to the focus on mine clearance, the extension of mine clearance deadlines, greater attention paid to victim assistance and international cooperation and assistance and it has also taken on ad hoc projects for States Parties.

We will provide written comments to Mr Caughley shortly and have actively participated in the ISU Review Taskforce.

Australia has been pleased to contribute financially to the Voluntary Trust Fund for the ISU almost every year since its inception. We have recently established a new three-year funding commitment of \$190,000 annually for core commitments, and we are also providing additional funding for the ISU review and activities in the Pacific.

The ISU draws considerable benefits from its position as part of the GICHD including administrative and other savings as well as sharing of technical and policy expertise.

Australia acknowledges that the financing of the ISU is an issue that needs to be addressed given the current reliance on funding from a few large donors. The ISU must work within its budget and that budget should precisely correspond to the expected receipt of funds for the year. We are also of the view that the voluntary

funding mechanisms has largely worked well and could serve as a good basis for the future. Australia is prepared to consider other funding mechanisms for the ISU including assessed contributions but notes the potential drawbacks of such a system

We look forward to Mr Caughley's final report and working with you, Madam President, and other delegations to help craft the recommendations to the tenth Meeting of States Parties.

Thank you.