

**Co-Chairs of the Standing Committee on
Mine Clearance, Mine Risk Education and Mine Action Technologies**

**Closing Statement
14 May 2003**

When he opened the meeting this morning, Ambassador Lint stated that by the 2004 Review Conference it will be important to know both:

- the extent to which advances have been made in implementing Article 5; and,
- the challenges that will remain in the period leading to the expiry of the Convention's deadlines for mine clearance in 2009.

The responsibility to implement this Article rests with the mine affected States Parties. Thus, they should use every possible opportunity to communicate matters related to their national situations. Providing these opportunities within this Standing Committee has been the top priority for Ambassador Lint and me.

We are pleased that 16 mine affected States Parties made use of the opportunity presented to them today. And in total this year, we have heard approximately half of the mine affected States Parties communicate important matters concerning:

- problems related to the mined areas,
- plans to address the problem of mined areas,
- progress made in meeting the obligations of Article 5; and,
- priorities for assistance in implementing national plans

Given that hearing the voice of mine affected States Parties will be essential in assessing progress at the Review Conference, we would propose that next year's Co-Chairs, Japan and Cambodia, continue to promote the use of this "4P" approach. And we would propose that the mine affected States Parties take full advantage of this approach.

Of course, mine affected States Parties are not alone in fulfilling their responsibilities. A community of actors stands ready to assist.

We are grateful that so many of these actors have provided updates on their cooperation activities and their approaches to providing assistance. To those States and organizations in a position to provide assistance, we would urge continued efforts to renew your commitments to mine action and to communicate these renewed commitments at future meetings of this Standing Committee.

Finally, in keeping with an important message from the President's Action Programme, I would suggest that all actors continue to pursue a variety of regional approaches to clearing mined areas and fulfilling the other aims of the Convention. In my view, it would be extremely beneficial if a profile-raising event was held in every region of the world in the lead-up to the Review Conference.

I wish you all the best as you continue your important work and I look forward to seeing you in Bangkok at the Fifth Meeting of the States Parties. And I look forward to welcoming you to Nairobi in 2004 at the Convention's First Review Conference.