

Mr. Chair, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me, at the outset, on behalf of my Government, thank the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining for its legal assistance in helping the Republic of Palau in becoming a State Party to the Ottawa Convention.

Since the Sixth Meeting of States Parties, Palau has continued to investigate how it could proceed with acceding to, and hence, implementing, the Ottawa Convention, given Palau's unique security arrangements with the United States of America.

Through these investigations, it has come clear that Palau's situation is not entirely dissimilar and that important examples that may be instructive to Palau exist amongst the existing States Parties.

Using the examples provided by States Parties that find themselves in similar situations, it appears that a case can be made for Palau to be able to fulfil its obligations, should it accede to the Convention.

Palau hopes that there will be a positive outcome to this matter in time for the Seventh Meeting of States Parties in September.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.