



Intersessional Standing Committee Meeting

25-29 May 2009 – Geneva

ICBL Statement on International Cooperation and Assistance

Thursday 28 May 2009

Delivered by Anthony Forrest

Thank you.

Because this is the last opportunity for the ICBL before the upcoming review conference to address States Parties on issues of cooperation and assistance, we would like to limit our statement to making two brief but important recommendations to States Parties in anticipation of the conference and with a view of challenges to cooperation and assistance that will likely follow after it.

First, we would like to make the strongest possible appeal to States Parties to take this year of the second review conference as an opportunity – and as a responsibility under Article 6 – to reinvigorate their financial and other support for mine action and victim assistance and, looking forward to the next ten years in the life of the treaty, to come to the review conference with concrete multiyear commitments for new funding to cover the costs of treaty implementation in the near future. We also call on mine-affected states themselves to contribute as much as possible to their own mine action, victim assistance and stockpile destruction activities.

The costs associated with ongoing victim assistance obligations and completion of Article 5 extension plans – which, we remind States Parties, were approved in part based on cost projections and funding targets – will place a strong demand on mine-affected and donor states for sustained or increased funding during at least the next five years. In preparing new funding targets and commitments, donor and mine-affected states must anticipate these ongoing pressures, and must respond to them in a coordinated way to ensure that future funding addresses the ongoing needs of all mine action sectors. States Parties must also ensure that enough funding is directed to mine-affected states that have not yet expressed a need for extensions to their clearance deadlines, to ensure that funding shortfalls don't result in a second wave of extension requests which otherwise could have been avoided.

Second, the lack of data on needs of states for their own mine action and victim assistance programs remains an issue of concern. We find that there is still not enough information available on national requirements to anticipate international funding needs for the foreseeable future. We urge mine-affected states to report more comprehensively and in greater detail on national budgets and funding shortfalls for mine action and victim assistance, to support the process of obtaining and coordinating international assistance.

Deliberate and timely implementation of treaty provisions is impossible without proper assessment of the need among mine-affected states for international assistance, and without clear reporting of how international funds and other forms of assistance will be applied to programming.

In this same regard, we urge all international donors to report publicly, in as much detail as possible, their annual contributions to mine action and victim assistance, including both monetary and in-kind assistance, in order to more fully and accurately assess measures taken by donor states in fulfilment of Article 6 of the treaty.

Thank you.