

Opening of the week of meetings of the Standing Committees

**His Excellency Ambassador Jürg Streuli of Switzerland
President of the Ninth Meeting of the States Parties**

25 May 2009

Excellencies, dear friends,

It is my pleasure to welcome the family of States Parties, our friends from non-governmental and international organizations and other States that share our interests back to Geneva for the first time since the Ninth Meeting of the States Parties.

The meetings of the Standing Committees this week provide us with a chance to take stock of what has transpired since the 9MSP and to lay solid foundation for what we might achieve at the Second Review Conference – the Cartagena Summit on a Mine-Free World.

You will recall that, at the 9MSP, I stressed that it all comes down to honouring our commitment.

This is a commitment that was not forced onto us but rather was something we embraced.

And this is a commitment that is not ambiguous but rather has been clear cut and evident from the start.

As I said at the 9MSP, honouring our commitment – that is, keeping our word – is precisely what is required of us if we are to end the landmine era.

We have four and a half days this week to engage in an open exchange of information that I hope will make it clear we intend to do honour our commitment to destroy, as soon as possible, all stockpiled and emplace mines.

And I hope that we will see meaningful action flow from words we utter about desiring to achieve the full and effective participation and inclusion of mine survivors, including men, women, boys and girls, in the social, cultural, political and economic life of their communities.

This week will culminate in a half-day preparatory meeting in advance of the First Review Conference.

Our normal five days of meetings of the Standing Committees has been compressed into four and a half.

Therefore, let us be efficient with our most precious resource this week, time.

And let me lead by example by ending my remarks here in officially opening this week of meetings.