



ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION TENTH MEETING OF STATES PARTIES

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE

Statement by Australia

Statement delivered by HE Mr Peter Woolcott, Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Geneva

30 November 2010

Through our Mine Action Strategy and as part of our desire to strengthen international mine action cooperation and assistance, Australia is supportive of efforts which: enhance the availability of and access to international cooperation and assistance; enhance the effectiveness of mine action programs; build national capacity as a key outcome of assistance; and promote cooperation between affected states.

Mr President

Australia is well on track to deliver on its \$100 million pledge to mine action. Since launching the strategy, Australia has already committed over \$58 million to specific programs of which over \$27 million has already been provided to support mine action work. This includes:

- In Sri Lanka \$9.2 million to address landmine contamination in the northern provinces.
- In Cambodia, \$4.8 million to clear land, provide rehabilitation services for victims and the provision of mine risk education.
- In Laos, over \$4 million to assist the Lao Government to meet its obligations under the new Convention on Cluster Munitions and build capacity to manage unexploded ordnance programs.
- Support to mine action programs in Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestinian Territories, Sudan, Uganda and Vietnam.
- Support to global mine action programs including those implemented by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining and the United Nations Mine Action Service.

Australia's assistance has increasingly focused on integrated mine action, partnering

with non-government organisations, mine clearance operators and provincial and local authorities. The integrated mine action programs combine mine action with broader development assistance, including activities such as agricultural activities and livelihood assistance, land mapping and titling, and community infrastructure. Australia takes a comprehensive approach to mine action and does not differentiate between action on mines, explosive remnants of war and cluster munitions.

Mr President

We were asked to consider some specific issues in our preparation for this meeting. I would like to share Australia's thoughts on some of these.

Matching needs and resources and ensuring more complementary use of resources between both donors and recipients is fundamental to the efficient and effective use of resources. We consider that a compilation of identified needs could assist in this regard.

Australia is also strongly supportive of national ownership of mine action programs. However, achieving national ownership and gaining an understanding of the size, location and quality of a State Party's implementation challenge often requires substantial resources and significant capacity. One way of building partnership between donor and recipient countries is to share the task of building the capacity of national governments to take ownership of their mine action programs. This will require flexibility from donors and initiative from recipients.

Mr President

Australia agrees that there are substantive challenges remaining in effectively channelling international cooperation and assistance to the mine action needs of affected states.

We therefore support the proposal by Zambia to establish a standing committee on international cooperation and assistance as a means to strengthen our engagement on this important issue. We consider this committee should be tasked to consider issues such as:

- How to better match available donor resources with the resource needs of affected states
- How to promote national resource mobilisation
- How to promote cooperation between developing country parties
- How to mobilise resources from a greater range of sources, including the private sector and international development banks
- How to strengthen coordination of international assistance at both the global and national levels including through modalities such as trust funds
- How to make better use of mine action expertise
- How to identify and promote best practice models of international assistance and take greater account of the results of research and evaluations and effectively engage all mine action stakeholders

Finally Mr President

Australia would like to acknowledge the crucial role played by civil society, including international organizations and non-government organizations in the implementation of the Convention. We thank all involved for their efforts.