

Ottawa Convention Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, Nov 28 – Dec 3, 2010

Cooperation and Assistance - Statement by CANADA

Thank you Mr. President,

As this is the first time I take the floor, on behalf our delegation, I wish to congratulate you, Gazmend, on your election as President. We know that you and your team will do an excellent job, as Susan and her team did last year – for which we are most grateful. Be assured that Canada will assist in any way we can.

Congratulations to Vice Presidents as well and our warm thanks to all of you, the ISU, the UN Secretariat and others who had a hand in the preparations of this Meeting of States Parties.

And a special thanks to Switzerland for hosting us once again in beautiful Geneva. I must say, the weather makes us at least, feel very much at home.

Mr. President, Cooperation and Assistance is a critically important topic and no element is more important than the matter of resources - as this is what makes all aspects of mine action possible.

We very much appreciate the attention that Norway dedicated to this topic throughout last year and are pleased that it is figuring so prominently at the beginning of your Presidency as well.

Our community has done a good job of maintaining reasonable levels of support to mine action over the past decade. But as Sheila has observed in her remarks this morning, we have never generated sufficient funds to meet all the priority needs of affected States. Norway noted in a paper on this subject last June that extension requests to that time alone identify requirements to 2019 of almost \$3Billion. The total needs of affected States are much higher.

This comes after more than a decade of mine action funding and, as Landmine Monitor has reported, a very small number of countries are now carrying the lion's share of support. Most worrisome is the fact that 10 states have seen declines over the past year, in some cases such as our own, that are *quite* significant, *something we hope to remedy.*

We are vulnerable, Mr. President, and like Zambia, we believe that concerted action must be taken to preserve existing levels and ideally, to increase support for Mine Action. For this reason, Canada welcomes Zambia's Proposal to create a new *Standing Committee on Resources, Cooperation and Assistance*. As Sheila mentioned, Canada will be pleased to roll the work of the *Linking Mine Action and Development Contact Group* into the work of this Standing Committee. Indeed it will be gratifying to see the rich presentations, debates and discussions that we have had in this Contact Group and in the Resource Utilization Contact Group chaired by Norway, brought into Plenary where everyone can participate and benefit.

We look forward to brainstorming ways we can mobilize more resources from existing sources and tap new sources of support. And how States can provide and use resources in novel ways to achieve even greater results.

How can affected States more effectively build mine action into national and sector development plans and budgets?

How can donors provide adequate and sustainable funding, ideally with multiple year commitments so affected States can plan with greater security and predictability?

Affected States need to get to know donors better and vice-versa and we would like to see the Standing Committee invite presentations by representatives of the World Bank and the Regional Development Banks to tell us about their grant and soft-loan facilities and modalities for accessing them for mine action.

We fought hard in the early part of this decade to persuade the World Bank in particular to consider support for mine action. Now they are open for business in this area but few if any have taken advantage of it.

We need to hear from Mine Action and Development Agencies from around the world to learn more about their priorities in mine action and to make them-aware of the relative needs that exist to achieve a more equitable distribution of support among affected States.

Let's have discussions and debates about "Dedicated and Integrated Funding - and the Pros and Cons of Each".

Or "Donor Coordination: Myth, Reality or a Work in Progress". Believe it or not, donor coordination is possible and no one is in a better position to encourage it than affected States themselves.

We need and we can come up with ways to recapture the imagination and increase the number of people who share the dream of a mine free world in order to get this job done.

So, Mr. President, Canada strongly supports Zambia's proposal which focuses on the mobilization and utilization of human technical and financial resources by both affected and donor states.

We also note and agree that it will not be the forum where affected states present their requests for support, as we must maintain focus on generating the resources they need.

And in the spirit of cooperation and trying to create synergy with other instruments, we suggest that any states who are not part of the Ottawa Convention but are party to the CCM and the CCW be invited to participate in our deliberations as well. We all stand to benefit and who knows, while they are here, we might persuade them to sign on to the Convention.

Thank you Mr. President.

Drafted and delivered by Earl Turcotte, Head of Delegation. Consulted: CANDEL