

**Statement by New Zealand: Check Against Delivery
Session on International Cooperation and Assistance**

Thank you, Mr President. As it is the first time my delegation takes the floor, allow me to congratulate you on your election as President, and also on the manner in which you have conducted our meeting thus far. Be assured, Mr President, that you have the full support of my delegation towards a successful meeting this week.

We thank you also for the paper you have provided for today's session, and also those presented by others, including Ambassador Eckey and the proposal by Zambia. My delegation has considered all of these papers with interest, bearing in mind the commitments we all made this time last year in Cartagena in relation to international cooperation in assistance. Those commitments require us all to strengthen our efforts to achieve the aims of the Convention.

New Zealand remains attentive to the critical importance of international cooperation and assistance in support of national efforts towards fulfillment of the Convention. To this end, we have been engaged for many years in the provision of technical support and funding for clearance activities, in as wide-ranging places as Afghanistan, Kosovo, Laos, Mozambique and Southern Lebanon. We are also pleased to provide funding to institutions such as UNMAS and the ICBL, in furtherance of their efforts related to mine action work. And, at the First Meeting of States Parties of the Convention on Cluster Munitions in Vientiane earlier this month, the New Zealand Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control was pleased to announce a contribution to target clearance in the north-west of Laos.

However, we are also mindful that the needs for mine action globally still outweigh the availability of support, and further mindful that as Zambia has noted in its paper, there is "increasing competition for limited resources, particularly in light of the recent global recession and the myriad priorities of the international community".

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has a specific article on international cooperation. Following from our role as Chair of the Ad-Hoc Committee that negotiated that Convention, my country, together with Mexico, is honoured to be working towards a resolution on the role of international cooperation in support of national efforts for the realization of the rights of persons with disabilities. This resolution would be adopted at the next session of the Human Rights Council and we note that the OHCHR is presently engaged in a thematic study on this same issue.

As a State party not only to this Ottawa Convention but also to the Convention on Cluster Munitions and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, we are particularly interested in building on the synergies between the relevant provisions of these three instruments to ensure maximal efficiency and effectiveness in resource mobilization. For this reason, my delegation remains open-minded, looking positively towards a new standing committee. We are very interested in listening to views of all parties today, and in our forthcoming sessions on victim assistance and mine clearance, to ensure that the efforts and political will we all pledged at Cartagena can be realised.