

Norwegian national statement in Enhancing international cooperation and assistance in the context of the Convention

Tuesday 30 November 2010

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Thank you.

We would like to repeat some of the observations we have made over the last couple of years in our discussions on cooperation and assistance and on the use of resources, in particular with regard to ensuring national ownership and to establish effective and flexible partnerships. Then I would also like to say a few words on how we ourselves try to adhere to these observations.

On several occasions we have emphasised that the hub in any partnership must be in each state and firmly located within relevant national authorities. We would like to agree with what the ICBL said previously on not building up unnecessary coordination mechanisms when relevant national authorities can fill this function – also in order to minimise funding spent on unneeded structures and maximise funding for actual implementation.

We should encourage, support and facilitate efforts to strengthen existing relevant government capacities in each country best suited and placed to address the specific problems. States Parties providing cooperation and assistance should make all efforts to ensure that their resources are sufficient and aimed at covering the prioritized needs, and that they are spent in an efficient and effective manner.

In order to be able to provide appropriate assistance in the most effective way, States Parties depend on the implementation of actions 34 and 35 of the Cartagena action plan. States Parties with obligations to destroy stockpiles, clear mined areas and assist victims must not only ensure that they have relevant and ambitious national plans, but also map available national resources and their needs for international cooperation and assistance, and make their needs known to other States Parties and relevant organisations.

In our work we try to increasingly adhere to these observations, and to the fact that partnerships need to be flexible and adapted to concrete challenges and realities in country situations. With Mozambique, we have entered into a multi-year political agreement to support their national mine action plan, by contributing funds for those mine clearance operators identified by the national authorities, based on their priorities. We work closely with our Embassy in Maputo to follow up with the national authorities, and take opportunities to have a flexible and continuous dialogue with them; on both technical and political issues, including in the margins of meetings such as this as well as with other partners in Maputo.

Another example is our recent dialogue with Ukraine where we are looking at how a limited amount of funding from Norway could assist the Ukrainian government in getting an early start of their destruction process in a situation where larger-scale destruction is getting delayed for financial and other reasons. As we all agreed in the Cartagena Action Plan, reflected in actions 7 through 11 starting as early as possible is key.

Yet another example of how we try to think in different ways has been entering into a multi-year agreement with our largest partner in humanitarian disarmament, Norwegian People's Aid. Having such a strategic partnership that covers a vertical range of activities that all inform each other, from implementation of the MBC and the CCM, clearance of village land in Southern Laos to policy discussions and negotiations in multilateral fora such as this week is very rewarding and effective, and, we believe, mutually beneficial.

In our work we must reflect that the magnitude and scope of the challenges vary considerably amongst States Parties. Thus there may be instances where the most effective use of resources could be to support targeted and limited operations designed specifically to address the identified task. We should be careful not to support structures and mechanisms that have little or no effect in solving our problems. This is a challenge for all actors in the mine action industry, including States, the UN, the ICRC and the NGOs.

We agree with the ICBL on the need to take a critical view on the funding mechanisms to ensure that resources provided can actually be used, effectively and efficiently, for their intended purposes. We also think that the ICBL's reflections on the limited need for further research and development should be taken seriously as this comes directly from the operators on the ground.

Mr President;

International cooperation is about both technical and political assistance, but it is also about financial support. Let me take this opportunity to assure you that Norway's increased and continued support to the implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions will not affect our commitment to the Mine Ban Convention.

We will continue to engage in the discussions on cooperation and assistance, and we will continue to identify new and flexible ways of working in partnerships to overcome specific challenges. As a consequence of the establishment of a new Standing Committee on Cooperation and Assistance, Norway intends to close the Contact Group on Resource Utilisation and rather contribute to the plenary discussions on resource issues.

Thank you.