

Universalisation

Mr President

While 156 States Parties is a solid demonstration of the international community's commitment to the principles in the Convention, there is some distance yet to go to achieve our common goal of universalisation.

We urge those yet to become party, to consider doing so as soon as possible.

As a country coming from a region of the world that is under-represented in the Convention, Australia continues to advocate strongly for universal adherence to the Mine Ban Convention. We do this on a bilateral basis, providing support and sharing experiences with those who are yet to join the Convention. We also work with international organizations and civil society to promote universalisation.

Australia acknowledges that accession to the Convention brings many responsibilities, responsibilities that can seem daunting to prospective parties. We encourage states parties to consider ways in which to make joining the Convention less daunting, including for example on reporting requirements for those developing country states that are not affected by landmines, that do not have stockpiles and that neither produce or use landmines.

Mr President

We recognise the important role that civil society continues to play continuing the momentum established when this instrument came into force ten years ago.

We have consistently contributed to the universalisation activities of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines in the Asia-Pacific region. Since 2005, we have provided financial assistance for the production of the annual Landmine Monitor Report, which is a valuable resource enabling the international community to measure progress and inform how to address remaining landmine challenges.

Australia is also a strong supporter of the operations of the Implementation Support Unit. The ISU has contributed significantly to universalisation efforts by supporting the President's outreach and increasing knowledge and awareness of the Convention.

Australia has also been a key supporter to the Sponsorship Programme under the Convention, enabling the participation of countries at annual meetings who may not otherwise be able to attend. This programme has an important role in promoting increased understanding of the Convention, enhancing our work and promoting its universalisation.

We have supported the activities of Geneva Call in Asia, to promote the adherence to the humanitarian objectives of the Mine Ban Convention by non-state actors.

Mr President

Once again, we urge States Parties to reaffirm their commitment to universalise the Convention ~~over the next five years~~ and take steps outlined in the Cartagena Action Plan.