Presentation of the analysis of Afghanistan's extension request

President of the Eleventh Meeting of the States Parties

Agenda Item 9a

The analysing group was grateful for the effort made by Afghanistan in preparing its request and for engaging with us in a cooperative manner.

Overall the analysing group was impressed with efforts undertaken by Afghanistan since entry into force to implement the Convention, with the quality of Afghanistan's request and with the process used by Afghanistan to prepare the request.

We noted that Afghanistan had taken steps consistent with Cartagena Action Plan commitments to identify the locations, to the extent possible, of all areas in which anti-personnel mines are known or are suspected to be emplaced.

We noted with satisfaction that constant progress had been made by Afghanistan every year since entry into force and that it is doing its utmost to ensure that all available methods for the full and expedient implementation of Article 5 are applied where and as relevant.

We further noted that should Afghanistan improve survey and demining techniques, it may find itself able to complete implementation in a shorter time frame than requested.

It was clear to the analysing group that, even with a consistent and sizeable effort having been undertaken by Afghanistan going back before entry into force of the Convention, Afghanistan faces significant remaining challenges in order to fulfil its obligations under Article 5.

We appreciated the steps outlined by Afghanistan to proceed with implementation during the requested extension period.

For instance:

- We noted the importance of Afghanistan having been pro-active in devising ways and means to implement the Convention in security risk areas.

- We noted Afghanistan's commitment to review its work plan on a continuous basis and its commitment to do so using an inclusive approach that was so important in the preparation of the extension request.

- And we noted the importance of Afghanistan having expressed factors that could affect the implementation of the plan contained in the request.

Our only significant critique of Afghanistan's request was that ambiguity exists regarding the goals expressed in the request given the use of terminology, such as the term "impact-free", which is not universally defined and which may not be consistent with the fulfilment of Article 5 obligations.

Other than this, we concluded by expressing our satisfaction that the information provided in the request is comprehensive, complete and clear.

We further noted that the plan presented is workable, lends itself well to be monitored, states clearly which factors could affect the pace of implementation, and includes a process for keeping the plan up to date should new information be obtained or circumstances change.

We also noted that the plan is ambitious and that its success is contingent upon the findings of the survey effort, stable funding and challenges posed by the security situation.

Finally, we noted that the annual benchmarks for progress contained in the request would greatly assist in assessing progress in implementation during the extension period.

In this regard, we noted the importance of Afghanistan providing updates relative to these benchmarks and reporting to the States Parties on any revisions to its plans and the reasons for such revisions.