



Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention

Twelfth Meeting of States Parties

Universalisation

Statement by Australia

6 December 2012

Statement delivered by Ms Christine Pahlman, Mine Action Coordinator, AusAID

Australia welcomes Finland's, Somalia's and now Poland's accession to the Convention and the growing international commitment to the Convention.

Although we note this progress, we still have much work to do to achieve universalisation.

Australia continues to advocate strongly for universal adherence to the Mine Ban Convention, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region. Australia welcomes Myanmar's increasing engagement in mine action and its announcement in July 2012 that it is considering joining the Mine Ban Convention.

Mr President

Australia was a key contributor, through funding and technical expertise, to the Regional Meeting on the Implementation of the Pacific Islands Forum Regional Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) on 24-26 October 2012. The meeting, hosted by Palau, the Pacific Islands Forum and the Implementation Support Unit, aimed to mobilise and coordinate efforts to address the problems caused by WWII UXO and other explosive remnants of war in the Pacific and to build awareness of the international legal framework and the importance of universalisation.

Australia has been a strong supporter of the operations of the Implementation Support Unit (ISU). The ISU has contributed significantly to universalisation efforts by supporting the President's outreach and increasing knowledge and awareness of the Convention. Australia welcomes the focus over the past two years in the South Pacific region.

Australia is also pleased with the EU Council's decision on 13 November to provide financial support to the ISU to undertake specific activities in the support of the Cartagena Action Plan, including on universalisation.

We recognise the enduring and vital role that civil society plays in advancing the momentum towards universalisation. Australia continues to contribute to the universalisation activities of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines in the Asia-Pacific region.

We support efforts by the Universalisation Contact Group which decided in their meeting on 22 November to engage high level officials from states not yet party to the Convention and encourage them to accede.

In closing, we urge States Parties to reaffirm and energise their commitment to universalise the Convention over the coming years.