

Statement by the Coordinator of the Sponsorship Programme

Agenda Item 10.e.iv

(Australia)

6 December 2012

Throughout 2012, Australia has continued to serve as the Coordinator of the Sponsorship Programme.

This is an informal programme, established in 2002 by a group of donors who sought to pool their resources in order to support active participation in the work of the Convention, particularly by States Parties in the process of implementing Convention obligations.

The programme is governed by its donors' group and is administered jointly by the ISU and the GICHD.

At both the May meetings of the Standing Committees and at the 12MSP, the Sponsorship Programme has proven again to have been an indispensable part of this Convention's implementation machinery.

Mr President

I am pleased to report that for the May meetings of the Standing Committees, the Donors' Group agreed to invite 42 States to request sponsorship for up to 66 delegates.

The 66 invited delegates comprised 59 delegates from 35 States Parties and 7 delegates from 7 States not Party to the Convention.

Of the delegates invited from States Parties, 19 were health care, social services, rehabilitation, reintegration or disability rights experts.

Of the 42 States that were invited to request sponsorship, 28 States accepted the offer with 44 delegates receiving sponsorship.

These included 43 delegates from States Parties to the Convention – 18 of whom were health care, social services, rehabilitation, reintegration or disability rights experts – and 1 delegate from a State not party.

In advance of the 12MSP, the Donors' Group agreed to invite 41 States to request sponsorship for up to 63 delegates.

This included inviting participation by up to 24 health care, social services, rehabilitation, reintegration or disability rights experts and 6 States not parties.

Preliminary information indicates that for this 12MSP, we have 47 sponsored delegates, including 18 health care, social services, rehabilitation, reintegration or disability rights experts.

In addition, two States not party to the Convention – the Lao PDR and Tonga – accepted our invitation to request sponsorship.

Mr President

The Sponsorship Programme costs its donors an average of approximately 3,500 Swiss Francs per sponsored delegate and an average of about 150,000 Swiss Francs in total per meeting.

While the programme requires only a modest amount of resources, it continues to play an important role in supporting the implementation process, as well as universalization efforts. Sponsoring capital- and field-based delegates to participate in the meetings of the Convention brings much expertise and enhanced information sharing on topics such as mine clearance and victim assistance.

In 2012, four States Parties have contributed to the programme or have made written commitments to contribute to the programme. These contributing countries are Australia, Denmark, Norway and Italy.

We encourage more States Parties to share the burden of this effort in 2013 and beyond.