



MINE BAN CONVENTION
13th Meeting of State Parties
COORDINATOR OF THE SPONSORSHIP PROGRAMME
Statement by Australia

5 December 2013

Statement delivered by Ms Namdi Payne

Mr President

Throughout 2013, Australia continued to serve as the Coordinator of the Sponsorship Programme.

The Sponsorship Programme is one of the Convention's oldest implementation support mechanisms. It was established on a voluntary basis by an interested group of States Parties in 2000, in advance of the 2MSP.

The Programme supports widespread participation in the work of the Convention, particularly by States Parties with few means and which are in the process of clearing mined areas, assisting the victims and destroying stockpiles. The Programme has allowed capital- and field-based delegates, selected on the basis of their expertise, to share information which enhances our discussions, and in turn, enriches their work when they return home.

This has helped us live up to our commitment in the Cartagena Action Plan to "ensure the continued involvement and effective contribution in all relevant convention-related activities by health, rehabilitation, social services, education, employment, gender and disability rights experts." Indeed, most mine-affected States would not be able to take part at expert-level in the victim assistance deliberations under this Convention without the Sponsorship Programme.

Mr President,

I thank the Implementation Support Unit and the GICHD, which administers the programme at no cost, for their advice and support. I also thank the Programme's Donors' group for providing sound strategic advice throughout the year. These combined efforts have meant that the Programme has operated effectively and efficiently.

I am pleased to report that for the Intersessional meetings in May, the programme sponsored 19 delegates, 9 of whom were experts on victim assistance, from 19 States Parties.

For this week's Meeting of States Parties, the programme sponsored 28 delegates, 9 of whom were experts on victim assistance, from 21 States Parties.

This was made possible by the six States Parties which contributed as donors in 2013. These countries were Australia, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Norway and Switzerland.

As we start planning for 2014, we recognise that widespread participation at the Third Review Conference in Maputo will be crucial in allowing mine-affected States Parties a strong voice in the future direction of the Convention's work. To ensure this, we need a greater number of States Parties, which are in a position to do so, to invest in this Programme in 2014.

With the Third Review Conference only months away, it is also important that the programme receives the funding it needs as early as possible in the New Year.

Let's not yet lose sight of the commitment made at the Second Review Conference in Cartagena that "States Parties in a position to do so will contribute to the Sponsorship Programme thereby permitting widespread representation at meetings of the Convention, particularly by mine-affected developing States Parties."

I thank you, Mr President.