

**Agenda Item 11.E.iv  
Implementation Support**

**Statement by the Co-Chairs of the Standing Committee on the General Status and Operation of the Convention (Argentina and Italy)**

The Standing Committee on the General Status and Operation of the Convention has been an important forum for the States Parties to discuss the broad matter of "implementation support." This remained the case in 2007. Some highlights of our work in this area are as follows:

With respect to the **Coordinating Committee**, six meetings were held since the 7MSP to prepare for and assess the outcome of the Intersessional Work Programme and to coordinate the work of the Standing Committees with the work of the Meeting of the States Parties. The Coordinating Committee continued to operate in an open and transparent manner with summary reports of meetings made available to all interested parties on the Convention's web site. We wish to thank Her Excellency, Ambassador Caroline Millar of Australia for the effective manner in which she facilitated the work of the Coordinating Committee in 2007.

With respect to the **Implementation Support Unit**, a number of States Parties again expressed their appreciation for the manner in which this unique mechanism has since the 7MSP supported the President, the President-Designate, the Co-Chairs, the Contact Group Coordinators, the Sponsorship Programme donors group and individual States Parties with initiatives to implement the Convention and otherwise pursue the aims of the Nairobi Action Plan. In 2006 a record number of donors contributed to the ISU Trust Fund. We hope both that contributions in 2007 at meet or exceed the 2006 level and that additional contributions will be made in 2008.

As many States Parties have come to recognize, additional contributions are especially needed given the heavy workload shouldered by the ISU in advising individual States Parties with their requests for extensions on the fulfilment of Article 5 obligations. In addition, we may wish to recall that the workload of the ISU has increased in recent years simply on the basis of the dramatic increase in the number of adherents to the Convention since the ISU was established.<sup>1</sup>

With respect to the **Sponsorship Programme**, this initiative has once again ensured the participation of States Parties which would normally not be represented at these meetings by relevant experts or officials. Moreover, the Sponsorship Programme, under the able guidance of Guy Pollard of the United Kingdom, has drawn a strong link between attendance at meetings and participation in them. This was once again especially the case with respect to how the Sponsorship Programme has become instrumental in the application of #39 of the *Nairobi Action Plan*, which calls on States Parties to include health, rehabilitation and social service professionals in the work of the Convention. In addition, the Sponsorship Programme in 2007 continued to contribute to the aims of universalisation, [with the Donors' Group having sponsored delegates from States such as Palau, which earlier this week announced that it had acceded to the Convention, and, Mongolia, which has indicated that it is on the path to acceding to the Convention in the near future.]

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<sup>1</sup> At the close of the 3MSP, there were 120 States which had ratified or had acceded to the Convention. At the start of the 8MSP there were 156 – a 30% increase.

Finally, with respect to the **Intersessional Work Programme**, we were grateful again for the support provided by Switzerland and the GICHD in ensuring the success of our programme of meetings in April of this year. Once again over 500 delegates registered for the meetings of the Standing Committees. Our thanks also goes to the European Commission and Canada for their voluntary contributions in ensuring that interpretation services could be provided at these meetings.

In summary, Mr. President, the operations of the Convention continue to be well supported by a flexible and interrelated set of implementation mechanisms. We look forward to our work continued to be supported by this machinery in 2008.