

Ninth Meeting

Geneva, 24 – 28 November 2008

Item 12 (e) (iv) of the provisional agenda

**Consideration of the general status
and operation of the Convention**

**Other matters essential for achieving
the Convention's aims**

Implementation Support

**REPORT ON THE FUNCTIONING OF THE
IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT UNIT,
NOVEMBER 2007 – NOVEMBER 2008**

Submitted by the Director of the
Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)

Background

1. At the Third Meeting of the States Parties (3MSP) in September 2001, the States Parties endorsed the President's Paper on the Establishment of the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) and mandated the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) to establish the ISU. The 3MSP also encouraged States Parties in a position to do so to make voluntary contributions in support of the ISU. In addition, the States Parties mandated the President of the 3MSP, in consultation with the Coordinating Committee, to finalise an agreement between the States Parties and the GICHD on the functioning of the ISU. The GICHD's Foundation Council accepted this mandate on 28 September 2001.

2. An agreement on the functioning of the ISU was finalised between the States Parties and the GICHD on 7 November 2001. This agreement indicates that the Director of the GICHD shall submit a written report on the functioning of the ISU to the States Parties and that this report shall cover the period between two Meetings of the States Parties. This report has been prepared to cover the period between the Eighth Meeting of the States Parties (8MSP) and the Ninth Meeting of the States Parties (9MSP).

Activities

3. The Nairobi Action Plan, adopted by the States Parties on 3 December 2004 at the First Review Conference, complemented by the Dead Sea Progress Report, continued to provide the ISU with clear and comprehensive direction regarding the States Parties' priorities. Following the 8MSP, the ISU continued to provide the President, the Co-Chairs, the Contact Group

Coordinators and the Coordinator of the Sponsorship Programme with thematic food-for-thought to assist them in their pursuit of the priorities identified by the 8MSP. This helped enable the Coordinating Committee to elaborate the general framework for intersessional work in 2008.

4. The ISU provided ongoing support to the President, the Co-Chairs, the Contact Group Coordinators and the Coordinator of the Sponsorship Programme in the achievement of the objectives they set for 2008. This involved the provision of advice and support, assisting with preparations for and follow-up from the June 2008 meetings of the Standing Committees, and making recommendations to the Sponsorship Programme's Donors' Group on linking attendance with substantive contributions by sponsored participants.

5. Certain Co-Chairs and Contact Group Coordinators again launched ambitious initiatives and the ISU responded accordingly. This continued to be the case with respect to the Co-Chairs of the Standing Committee on Victim Assistance who sought to build upon the efforts of their predecessors by assisting the 26 most relevant States Parties in inter-ministerial efforts to enhance victim assistance objective setting and planning. Through project funding provided by Australia, Austria, New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland, the ISU was able to retain the position of victim assistance specialist in order to provide support to these States Parties in their inter-ministerial processes of establishing objectives and developing and implementing plans. Some degree of support or advice was offered or provided to each of these States Parties. In addition, 12 of these 26 States Parties received specialised process support visits.

6. The ISU also supported the Co-Chairs of the Standing Committee on Victim Assistance in organising a parallel programme during the June 2008 meetings of the Standing Committees which aimed to make the best possible use of the time dedicated by health, rehabilitation and social services professionals attending the meetings to the work of the Convention. The parallel program stimulated discussion and increased the knowledge of the expert participants on key components of victim assistance with a particular emphasis given, pursuant to the understandings adopted at the First Review Conference, to the place of victim assistance in the broader contexts of disability, health care, social services, and development. Fifteen health, rehabilitation and social services professionals representing their States, along with other experts and landmine survivors took part in this programme.

7. On the basis of project funding provided by Norway, the ISU provided support to the Coordinator of the Resource Utilisation Contact Group in convening a workshop on land release methods, the conclusions of which were contained in the Coordinator's paper submitted to 9MSP.

8. Providing advice and information to individual States Parties on implementation matters continued to be a profound aspect of the ISU's work relative to previous years due to the priority States Parties have placed on the implementation of Article 5 during the period 2005 to 2009 and the decisions of the 7MSP concerning a process related to Article 5 extension requests.

9. The ISU received a large number of requests for advice or support with respect to the mine clearance obligations contained within Article 5. Country visits to provide advice and support were made to the following 10 States Parties that were or are in the process of preparing a request for an extension in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention: Bosnia and

Herzegovina, Cambodia, Colombia, Ecuador, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Peru, Tajikistan, Venezuela and Zimbabwe.

10. The ISU provided support to the President, the Co-Chairs and Co-Rapporteurs in executing their mandate related to the analysis of requests submitted in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention. Providing this support absorbed an unexpectedly great amount of the ISU's time in 2008 in part because of the volume of requests received and hence the magnitude of the service required to meet the needs of the President, the Co-Chairs and Co-Rapporteurs.

11. The ISU continued to provide substantial support to States Parties in fulfilling their Article 7 transparency reporting obligations. This included advising individual and groups of States Parties on their obligations and ways to fulfil them.

12. The ISU also responded to numerous other requests for implementation support each month in addition to responding to requests for information from States not parties, the media, and interested organizations and individuals. In addition, the ISU fulfilled its traditional role of communicating information about the Convention, its status and operations at regional workshops convened by States Parties or other actors in South East Asia, the Pacific, and Latin America.

13. In 2006 it was recalled that the ISU's mandate states in part that the rationale for the unit is based on the support provided by the ISU being "critical to ensure that all States Parties could continue to have direct responsibility and involvement in the management and direction of the implementation process." On this basis, the ISU continued to support implementation and to address the participation needs of small States Parties. With project funding provided by Australia, the ISU continued to implement Phase 2 of its Small States Strategy in the pursuit of the aims of the Convention in the Pacific. In August 2008 this involved supporting Palau in hosting a sub-regional workshop for states of the North Pacific, offering specific advice on overcoming barriers to accession. This workshop also provided the opportunity for the ISU and other experts to advise the Convention's newest State Party on how to fulfil its obligations under Article 7 and Article 9 of the Convention.

14. In August 2008 an agreement was signed entrusting the ISU with the implementation of the European Union Joint Action on the universalisation and implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. The purpose of the Joint Action is to increase the membership to the Convention, support preparations for the Second Review Conference and assist States Parties in fully implementing the Convention. The Joint Action foresees 6 regional or sub-regional workshops and up to 25 technical assistance visits undertaken in advance of the Second Review Conference.

15. The ISU provided its traditional substantive and organizational support to the President-Designate of the Ninth Meeting of the States Parties (9MSP), working closely with the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA). In addition, the ISU provided advice to States Parties with respect to preparations for the Second Review Conference.

16. The ISU continued to collect a large number of pertinent documents for the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Documentation Centre, which is maintained by the ISU as part

of its mandate. The Documentation Centre continues to be used by States Parties and other interested actors as an important source of information on the Convention. In response to priorities articulated by some States Parties, the ISU established a comprehensive set of resource materials on victim assistance within the Documentation Centre.

17. In 2008, the ISU continued to receive requests by those with an interest in other issue areas to learn from the experience of implementation support in the context of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. The ISU supported States Parties participating in dialogues on coherence and coordination in the implementation of the international instruments that concern conventional weapons.

Financial arrangements

18. As indicated in the President's Paper on the Establishment of the Implementation Support Unit and the agreement between the States Parties and the GICHD, the GICHD created a Voluntary Trust Fund for activities of the ISU in late 2001. The purpose of this fund is to finance the on-going activities of the ISU, with the States Parties endeavouring to assure the necessary financial resources.

19. In accordance with the agreement between the States Parties and the GICHD, the Coordinating Committee was consulted on the 2008 ISU budget.¹ The 2008 ISU budget was distributed to all States Parties by the President of the 8MSP along with an appeal for voluntary contributions. The budget was revised and reissued in May 2008 to include a new budget line after the ISU was informed that separate donor funding to cover the costs of interpretation at meetings of the Standing Committees was no longer available. The Coordinating Committee, acknowledging that interpretation traditionally provided at meetings of the Standing Committees is indispensable in ensuring effective participation in these meetings, agreed that these costs should be covered using the ISU Voluntary Trust Fund. With this new budget line added, the ISU budget for 2008 totalled CHF 943,500. States Parties have been slow to submit contributions in 2008 with funds received as of 25 September totalling CHF 352,570.

20. At the 7MSP, the States Parties agreed on a process to assist them in considering requests for extensions including: (a) that in preparing "an analysis" of extension requests "the President, Co-Chairs and Co-Rapporteurs, in close consultation with the requesting State, should, where appropriate, draw on expert mine clearance, legal and diplomatic advice, using the ISU to provide support;" and, (b) that all States Parties in a position to do so are encouraged "to provide additional, earmarked funds to the ISU Trust Fund to cover costs related to support the Article 5 extensions process." This aspect was again taken into account in the 2008 budget and in the appeal for financing distributed by the President of the 8MSP. Since the 8MSP, contributions for these purposes, totalling CHF [...] have been received from Canada, the Czech Republic and Norway.

21. In accordance with the agreement between the States Parties and the GICHD, the Voluntary Trust Fund's 2007 financial statement was independently audited by PriceWaterhouseCoopers. The audit indicated that the financial statement of the Voluntary Trust

¹ Basic infrastructure costs for the ISU are covered by the GICHD through funds provided by Switzerland and therefore are not included in the ISU budget.

Fund had been properly prepared in accordance with relevant accounting policies and the applicable Swiss legislation. The audited financial statement, which indicated that the 2007 expenditures of the ISU totalled CHF 728,019.65, was forwarded to the President, the Coordinating Committee and contributors to the ISU Trust Fund.

**Contributions to the ISU Voluntary Trust Fund,
1 January 2007 to 25 September 2008**

	Contributions received in 2007 (CHF)	Contributions received in 2008 ^a (CHF)
Albania	1,000.00	1,000.00
Australia	80,104.00	
Austria	89,970.04	55,873.00
Belgium	48,534.53	
Canada	105,593.68	18,936.00
Chile	17,529.66	15,285.00
Cyprus		2,700.00
Czech Republic	58,593.11	67,040.00
Estonia	4,055.51	
Germany	24,228.75	24,299.00
Hungary	10,927.00	
Ireland	24,444.78	
Italy	80,240.00	
Lithuania	10,000.00	
Malta	1,800.00	
Norway	161,525.63	157,558.00
Slovenia	6,740.16	7,907.00
Spain	48,660.06	
Sweden	35,058.00	
Turkey	1,752.82	1,974.00
Total Contributions	810,757.73	352,570.00

^a As of 25 September 2008.