

Third Annual Pledging Conference for the Implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Tuesday, 27 February 2018

I. SUMMARY

The Third Annual Pledging Conference for the Implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention was held in Geneva on 27 February 2018.

The Conference was opened and chaired by the President of the Seventeenth Meeting of the States Parties, H.E. Suraya Dalil, Ambassador of Afghanistan in Geneva. A keynote address was delivered by the Chief Executive of Afghanistan, H.E. Abdullah Abdullah.



The first part of the Conference featured presentations by the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Implementation Support Unit (ISU) on its budget and work plan for 2018, by Australia, in its capacity as Coordinator of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention's Sponsorship Programme on the priorities for the Sponsorship programme in 2018 and by the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs on the status of assessed contributions for the Convention's Meetings of the States Parties.

41 delegations were present at the Pledging Conference, including 34 States Parties, 1 State not party and 6 non-governmental and international organisations.

- 16 States Parties made pledges to the Implementation Support Unit amounting to approximately CHF 544,000 and 3 States Parties pledged CHF 47,500 for the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Sponsorship Programme.
- After the recently celebrated 20th anniversary of the signing of the Convention, the many accomplishments of the States Parties in their efforts to implement the Convention were highlighted by many. However, emphasis was also placed on the fact that much remains to be done if 2025 is to be achieved and that meeting this ambitious target will not be an easy task.
- In considering ways to advance work and achieve the aims of the Convention, a number of States Parties recognised the need for sustainable funding to mine action programmes in affected countries as well as to the Convention's Implementation Support mechanisms, such as the Implementation Support Unit, which is mandated to oversee the implementation of the Convention and the Maputo Action Plan. The need for strong national ownership and efficiency were highlighted as important elements in achieving clear progress towards completion.
- A number of donor States highlighted their long standing commitments to the goals of the Convention and their continued support to humanitarian mine action including by announcing multi-year contributions to mine action programmes and projects.

- The importance of partnerships between organisations and states was highlighted as key in the implementation of the Convention and to achieving its aims. A number of donor States emphasised the need for all States Parties to fulfil their own obligations under the Convention but also to provide assistance if they are in a position to do so.
- Many States Parties highlighted the important role played by the ISU and expressed their appreciation for its work. States Parties also stressed the need for all States Parties in a position to do so to provide contributions to ensure the sustainability of the support provided by the ISU and to increase ownership over the unit.
- The importance of continued support to the sponsorship programme to ensure that mine affected States Parties can continue effectively participating in the work of the Convention was highlighted as an important matter in the Convention's implementation.
- Finally, a number of States Parties also emphasised the importance of ensuring the sustainability of the work carried out under this Convention, by ensuring that the costs for Meetings of the States Parties are paid in full.

II. KEYNOTE ADDRESSES

- **H.E. Abdullah Abdullah, Chief Executive of Afghanistan** indicated that:

“When used, a landmine does not see boundaries, nor does it differentiate between its victims. That is why we need a global perspective and approach to make countries and all armed groups, whatever their affiliation, to realise that it is inhuman and illegal to deploy landmines.”

“This Convention is not solely about clearing mined areas by 2025, but it is also our wholehearted commitment to protect and to ensure that those who have suffered live a dignified life, able to exercise their human rights as other citizens.”

“We still have a mighty task ahead of us, but one that has been proven possible by the great achievements we have had together. Our work can be sustained through real partnerships and real commitments. This means holding each other accountable, for the responsibility of meeting our shared goals since we pledged to “end the suffering and casualties caused by these weapons” by joining this Convention.”

“This pledging conference ensures that the mechanisms we have set up to support our efforts are fully funded, including the Convention's Implementation Support Unit, the meetings of States Parties of our Convention, and the sponsorship programme. A serious joint effort together with national authorities, national and international non-governmental organizations such as the HALO Trust, Mines Advisory Group, Norwegian People's Aid that are making progress on the ground, other organisations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines and the GICHD and States in a position to provide assistance are vital to the continued success of our Convention.”

- **H.E. Mr. Manabu Horii, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan** highlighted that:

“In 2017, we celebrated the 20th anniversary of the adoption and signature of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. Due to the efforts of the States Parties and relevant organizations, we have made great achievements in various fields. However, a lot of work still remains to be done in order to achieve our important goal of realizing a mine-free world by 2025.”

“The partnership between donor states and affected states has been strengthened through various international cooperation projects, including victim assistance programs. However, it is reported that landmines are still used in conflict areas and the number of casualties in 2016 was the highest since 2000.”

“Achieving our goal of realizing a mine-free world by 2025 is not an easy task. However, aiming to put an end to the human suffering and casualties caused by landmines, Japan will redouble its effort and continue to cooperate with the international community, in particular, with States Parties, international organizations, and NGOs.”

III. PRESENTATIONS ON THE CONVENTION’S MECHANISMS

- **Mr. Juan Carlos Ruan, Director of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (ISU)**, recalled that the ISU’s work plan and budget for 2018 was adopted by the Sixteenth Meeting of the States Parties and totals CHF 502'762 for “core support”. He also indicated that the ISU is extremely grateful for the support from States Parties over the last few years, which has allowed the ISU to carry out its work without having to spend time being concerned of the financial situation. Over the last two years the States Parties have fully supported the “core support” of the ISU as well as provided additional funding which has allowed the Financial Security Buffer established by the States Parties to reach the level equivalent to one year of the ISU’s core work plan and ensured additional funding to be dedicated to what the States Parties have designated as “enhanced support” concerning victim assistance in 2018.

- **Ms. Sophie Delfolie, ISU Implementation Support Specialist**, recalled the mandate of the ISU and presented the main activities of the ISU work plan for 2018, all of them aiming to have an impact on the implementation of the Convention and the Maputo Action Plan. She indicated that it is within the framework of our mandate that the ISU work plans are developed. This ensures a certain degree of continuity in the ISU’s work and in the support that the ISU provides to all States and to the Convention. The office holders that the ISU supports however are different every year and they guide where the emphasis of the work is placed.

- **Mr. Hugh Watson of Australia, Coordinator of the Sponsorship programme**, highlighted the priorities of the Convention’s Sponsorship Programme for 2018. In doing so, he indicated that:

“The Sponsorship Programme is essential to the work of the Convention. It enables participation in the meetings of the Convention and direct interaction with the Convention’s Committees by capital and field-based experts from States Parties with limited means. Such participation helps these experts coordinate their countries’ implementation of their mine clearance, stockpile destruction and victim assistance obligations.”

“We urgently need more States Parties, which are in a position to do so, to invest in the Sponsorship Programme for 2018 to ensure broad participation at the Intersessional Meetings and the Seventeenth Meeting of the States Parties. We need to allow mine-affected States Parties a strong voice in the future direction of the Convention’s work.”

- **Mr. Peter Kolarov, Political Affairs Officer at the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs**, highlighted the differences between the two cost structures underlying the Convention: 1) the voluntary funding for the Implementation Support Unit (CHF 502,762 in 2018 and the assessed contributions which cover the conference services costs of the annual Meetings of the States Parties (USD 651,500 in 2018). He recalled that, at the Fifteenth Meeting of the States Parties, States Parties and States not party participating had been requested to proceed with the payment of their share of the estimated costs as soon as the assessment invoices have been received from the United Nations and in any event no later than the meeting itself in order to avoid issues that can potentially affect the viability and efficiency of future meetings. He highlighted that 30 States still have outstanding contributions creating a deficit of approximately USD 200,000 and appealed to these States to pay their contributions as soon as possible.

IV. STATEMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS OF PLEDGES

State	Pledges
Australia	<p>Indicated that it is committed to supporting the implementation of this Convention and other international action towards a world free of landmines and other explosive remnants of war. Confirmed that Australia will continue its long-standing support of the effective operation of this Convention, in a range of different ways. Indicated that it will continue to make an annual voluntary contribution of AUD 140,000 (CHF 103,000) to the Mine Ban Convention Implementation Support Unit under its current 2016-2019 funding arrangement and that it will continue to serve as Sponsorship Coordinator for this Convention as well continuing to make an annual contribution of AUD 35,000 (CHF 26,000) to the Sponsorship Programme, through to 2019. Indicated that Australia's contributions to the implementation of this Convention are just one element of their broader contributions to global mine action. Australia funds international agencies working globally across all areas of mine action including in mine clearance, risk education and victim assistance. Australia also supports specific bilateral programmes supporting clearance work and other aspects of mine action in affected countries. Indicated that Australia has also made a range of contributions in recent years to victim assistance efforts. Strongly encouraged all States Parties to contribute, as they are able, to the critical work of the ISU, the Sponsorship Programme, and direct mine action through national, bilateral and global programmes.</p>
Austria	<p>While the ISU provides invaluable services to the Convention and its States Parties, we are all called upon to contribute to the funding necessary for the provision of these services. In previous years Austria continuously supported the ISU through EU as well as national funding. Despite budgetary constraints Austria hopes that this year it will be able to continue its financial support to the ISU. However, as the 2018 general budget of Austria is still under consideration, we are not yet in the position to pledge a specific sum.</p>
Belgium	<p>Indicated that it remains strongly committed to the Convention both politically and financially. By chairing the Committee on Victim Assistance this year, indicated that it aims to significantly advance victim assistance and to raise awareness on the importance of addressing the needs and guaranteeing the rights of mine victims. From a financial point of view, indicated that it will continue to pay attention to the state of health of the internal mechanisms of the Convention. Indicated that it is not at this stage in a position to announce a global mine action contribution for 2018 as the budgets are still being reviewed. However, indicated that it already plans to contribute 500'000 euros to ICRC's mine action activities in Iraq for 2018 and is considering funding a number of projects relevant to the Convention. Indicated that further details will be shared once decisions have been taken.</p>
Canada	<p>The majority of Canada's support to mine action is delivered through predictable multi-year funding which ensures that Canada's implementation partners can focus their efforts where it is more sustainable and effective in the long term. Announced that Canada will also support universalization of conventional weapons Conventions, including the Ottawa Convention. Indicated that to facilitate the advancement of the Convention, Canada continues to serve on the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance. Throughout this engagement, Canada has first-hand knowledge of the importance and the value of the Implementation Support Unit.</p>
Colombia	<p>Indicated that our common goal, to reach a mine free world by 2025, requires our coordinated efforts as well as the technical expertise and political will that might allow us to overcome difficulties and challenges that we will have to face during the process. International cooperation, both technical and financial, are key elements for this process and must be sustainable to produce real changes worldwide. Indicated that the progress made in Colombia has been reached with the combined efforts of several actors and the permanent support of the international community, which will continue to be a</p>

State	Pledges
	fundamental component in this process. Indicated that countries receiving international cooperation also have responsibilities. We must be accountable and promote transparency while properly managing the resources and capacities we are obtaining. This is the only way to guarantee the continuity of the assistance for a sustained period, required to get closer to our objective of a mine free world.
Finland	Indicated that it remains steadfast in its support to the implementation of the Convention and the vision of a landmine free world by 2025. Finnish support to humanitarian mine action dates back to the early 1990's and the current humanitarian mine action policy will channel around 12 million euros during 2016-2020 to five countries: Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Somalia and Ukraine. Finland's implementing partners are UNMAS, ICRC, Halo Trust, MAG and GICHD. Announced that Finland will again pledge 10'000 euros in voluntary support to the Implementation Support Unit. Indicated that it looks forward to continuing its dialogue and good cooperation with the ISU, the Presidency and all States Parties of the Convention.
Germany	Thanked the ISU for their valuable, dedicated and goal-oriented work over the past year and indicated that Germany is fully committed to supporting the ISU in the future. Further indicated that it was ready to contribute 40'000 euros to this year's ISU budget like in previous years. Indicated that with this contribution, it hoped that it could deliver its fair share to the full implementation of the tasks that the ISU is charged with.
Italy	Indicated that the assistance and backing of the Implementation Support Unit will remain indispensable as we to translate the goal of a mine-free world into a reality. Indicated that it highly valued the professional, qualified and skilled work conducted by the ISU staff and that it has been a long-standing supporter of the ISU. Indicated that it is satisfied that the financial difficulties the ISU faced in the past are now overcome (...) Further indicated that it particularly welcomed that current resources will allow the ISU to perform "enhanced support" activities in the area of Victim Assistance. Announced that it will support ISU activities also in the current year and that it firmly intends to keep its financial contribution at the same level as last year, amounting to 57'500 euros. Indicated that this contribution will be part of its wider efforts to support mine action activities, to which an overall amount of financial assistance similar to that of last year (3.5 million euros) will be allocated.
Japan	Indicated that it places strong emphasis on the role that the ISU plays in coping with the remaining challenges. Japan further indicated that since fiscal year 2015, it has contributed to the ISU's budget, and it expressed intention to contribute 75'539 CHF to the ISU for fiscal year 2018, subject to the completion of the necessary domestic procedures. Japan indicated that it expects that its contributions will be used in an effective way toward the goal of realising a mine-free world. Also indicated that first, it will continue to support those countries that are most heavily affected by anti-personnel mines and ERWs; second, it will promote regional and South-South cooperation; and third, Japan indicated that it aims to provide comprehensive support to victim assistance. Emphasised that achieving the goal of realising a mine-free world by 2025 is not an easy task. However, aiming to put an end to the human suffering and casualties caused by landmines, Japan indicated that it will redouble its effort and continue to cooperate with the international community, in particular, with States Parties, international organizations, and NGOs
Netherlands	Indicated that it runs a multi-annual humanitarian Mine Action and Cluster Munitions programme of 45 million euros, spanning the period 2016-2020, and that the programme focuses on gender and innovation and includes funds up to 10 million euros for emergency response. Indicated that it supports the UNMAS Voluntary Trust Fund with an annual contribution of 3 million euros. Indicated that it has been supporting the ISU with a multi-annual contribution of 40'000 euros up until 2021 at least. Indicated that it also supports the sponsorship programme with a multi-annual contribution, also until 2021, of 10'000 euros.
New Zealand	Announced that it is again making a modest contribution to the work of the Convention's

State	Pledges
	<p>Implementation Support Unit in 2018. Indicated that New Zealand's donation of NZD 5,000 is commensurate with what is understood New Zealand's assessed contribution would be, were the ISU to be funded compulsorily. Indicated that it was pleased to have been able to make that payment early and aims to continue this regular support for the ISU over the coming years. Highlighted that it was very appreciative of the work of the ISU and of their commitment to making the Convention a truly universal instrument.</p>
Norway	<p>Indicated that it welcomes the work carried out by the ISU, including in supporting States Parties in fulfilling their obligations under the Convention. Announced that Norway will make a voluntary contribution of 295'000 Norwegian kroner, equivalent to 35'000 Swiss francs to the operation of the ISU in 2018. Indicated that it continues to place high priority on implementing the Convention in the field and that it is proud to support mine action in 20 countries worldwide. Indicated that it will contribute around 38 million USD to mine action globally this year, with an emphasis on survey activities and mine clearance in affected states, as well as assistance to mine survivors. Indicated that it will continue to give priority to countries that demonstrate strong national ownership and clear progress towards completion.</p>
Poland	<p>Indicated that Poland, long before becoming a State Party to the Convention, being engaged in missions abroad, has delivered assistance to post-conflict recovery areas and has contributed to alleviate the humanitarian problems caused by unexploded ordnance and landmines. Indicated that it also contributed to different projects aimed at the clearance of mines and explosive remnants of war. Indicated that it consistently attach a great importance to the work of the Convention's Implementation Support Unit. Further indicated that, in support of the ISU activity, Poland has contributed 10,000 euros to its 2017 and 2018 budgets. Extended Poland's sincere gratitude to the ISU team for its commitment and excellent work.</p>
Sweden	<p>Sweden is firmly committed to the principles of the Convention, implementing its own obligations as well as providing substantial practical support to other States Parties to do likewise. Indicated that it expects to continue this until a world free of anti-personnel land mines is reached. Indicated its appreciation of the excellent service delivered to the Convention and its member states by the Implementation Support Unit, a key actor, tasked with facilitating and overseeing the implementation of the Convention and the Maputo Action Plan. Sweden has over the past few years been one of the major contributors to the ISU, providing at least 500'000 Swedish Kronor per year, corresponding to some 60-70'000 Swiss Francs depending on the exchange rate, all as core funding. Confirmed Sweden's intention to continue voluntary contributions to the ISU. Indicated that it expected to be able to take a decision in the near future on allocating a sum of up to 500'000 Swedish Kronor – at present approximately 60'000 Swiss Francs - to be used in 2018 for the running activities of the ISU. Sida, the Swedish development authority, has recently decided on a new programme for Mine Action, to be implemented by Danish Demining Group (DDG) and Mines Advisory Group (MAG) in up to 15 affected countries, with a total budget of 320 MSEK or approx. 32 million EUR over 3 years.</p>
Switzerland	<p>Indicated that the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) plays a key role in the Convention and its implementation. Its support is essential for affected countries as well as for the different committees and office holders forming the machinery of the Convention. A fully functional ISU is necessary to meet the many challenges that the Convention is faced with, like the 2025 objective, the challenge of improvised antipersonnel mine or the organisation of the upcoming Review Conference. Welcomed that progress has been achieved towards ensuring that the ISU is financially secured. The ISU budgets in 2016 and 2017 have been fully covered. The financial security buffer is now filled. It will be important to consolidate these positive developments going forward and that main donors continue their efforts. Renewed this year again its support to the ISU, and announced that Switzerland will make a contribution of CHF 80'000 to the ISU for the 2018 budget. With a view to improve financial</p>

State	Pledges
	<p>predictability and in the perspective of the 2019 Review Conference, announced already that Switzerland will make a similar contribution in 2019. Indicated that it plans to enter into a multi-year agreement with the ISU. Also pledged CHF 10'000 towards the Sponsorship Programme for 2018,</p>
Thailand	<p>Committed to contribute 10'000 CHF annually to the ISU during 2016-2019, period which corresponds to the current ISU's four-year work plan. In order to support the long-term financial stability of the ISU, indicated that it is willing to continue its financial support during the next ISU's 4 year work plan during 2020-2023. Continuity of financial support is key to the efficient operation of the ISU. Apart from a financial contribution, Thailand indicated that it stands ready to further provide in-kind contributions to the ISU and our Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention community. The in-kind contributions could be in the form of shared best practices and experiences through cooperation and training in the areas that Thailand has expertise, including demining, victim assistance and mine awareness.</p>

Organisation	Pledges
European Union	<p>Indicated that the EU is fully committed to supporting the implementation of the Convention and the vision of a landmine free world by 2025. Indicated that the Convention is a success story that shows what multilateral arms control and disarmament are capable of. Emphasised the need to increase efforts to preserve the norm and realise the Convention's promise. Expressed its appreciation for the work carried out by the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) of the Convention which continues to benefit from EU funding. The EU Council Decision, adopted by EU Foreign Ministers last August, supports the ISU in assisting States Parties to implement the Convention and promoting its universalisation. This Decision, worth of 2.3 million euros, is another illustration of the EU's commitment to building partnerships.</p>
GICHD	<p>Indicated its commitment to supporting the Convention implementation machinery, and particularly the Implementation Support Unit, which is delivering unfailing support to States Parties. Indicated that for many years, and thanks to the support by Switzerland, the GICHD provides in-kind support to the ISU such as office space and IT infrastructure. Also indicated that the GICHD and the ISU's respective mandates provide a conducive framework for cooperation.</p>
ICRC	<p>Indicated that the success of this Convention is largely thanks to the sustained commitment and partnerships of mine affected States and States in a position to help them. Equally important is the engagement and actions of international and non-governmental organisations. Equally important contributors to the success of the Convention are the effective and efficient operation of its Implementation Support Unit and the Convention's sponsorship programme. Commended both for their efforts and indicated that they have played a critical role in supporting States Parties and in furthering the goals of the Convention. Urged all State Parties able to do so to provide resources and exert influence where necessary to ensure that by 2025 States Parties are landmine free and with no new victims on their territories and stressed that no affected State Party should be left behind in this process. Indicated that it has a presence in most mine affected countries and operations that often focus on victim assistance, mine risk education, risk reduction and cooperating with partners specialised in clearance. Highlighted that action over the next few years will be decisive, if the humanitarian aims of the Convention are to be achieved. Called on the international community to again use its collective determination and harness the remarkable partnership in action, programmes and funding.</p>

MAG	<p>Indicated that need for more donors to step up their commitment if we are to achieve the 2025 goal that we set ourselves in Maputo. Indicated that international assistance to be directed towards mine action projects that address development challenges is needed, as well as humanitarian ones. Assistance to address all pillars of mine action, including victim assistance is needed. Indicated that increased donor support, particularly in countries experiencing humanitarian emergencies, such as Iraq and Afghanistan, while the right thing to do should not come at the expense of other countries where large communities remain trapped in poverty from conflicts that have ended years ago. Positive studies conducted by colleagues in the sector demonstrate the link between mine action and Sustainable Development Goals, and increased efforts need to be made to ensure these are taken into consideration in practice as well. We also encourage donors to support the efforts made by States Parties to achieve treaty compliance, particularly Article 5 implementation. Countries like Angola and Zimbabwe, that have submitted good quality extension requests or countries like Bosnia and Herzegovina who has been working to improve its land release methodologies, should be rewarded for their efforts. In a sector where the needs significantly outweigh the resources, increased funding is always encouraged. But where that is not possible, small amounts of funding used effectively can make a significant difference. Where and how the funding is spent can be as important. The key to ensuring maximum impact is dialogue – between donors, affected states, operators and other expert organisations.</p>
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Pledges for the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Implementation Support Unit in 2018

State	CHF amount	Original currency amount	Original currency
Australia		140,000	AUD
Austria		See narrative table	
Belgium		See narrative table	
Canada		See narrative table	
Colombia		See narrative table	
Finland		10,000	EUR
Germany	40,000		EUR
Italy		57,500	EUR
Japan	75,539		CHF
Netherlands		40,000	EUR
New Zealand		5,000	NZD
Norway	35,000		CHF
Poland		10,000	EUR
Sweden		See narrative table	
Switzerland	80,000		CHF
Thailand	10,000		CHF

Pledges for the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Sponsorship Programme

State	CHF amount	Original currency amount	Original currency
Australia		35,000	AUD
Netherlands		10,000	EUR
Switzerland	10,000		CHF