

Coordinating Committee Meeting

Thursday 15 May 2008

President's Summary

1. Introductory Remarks

The Chair welcomed the Coordinating Committee to the last meeting in advance of the June meetings of the Standing Committees.

2. Discussions on Key Implementation Challenges and Opportunities

In accordance with the practice established in the last meeting of the Coordinating Committee, the Chair announced that time would be allocated to discussions on implementation challenges and on opportunities that may exist to overcome these challenges.

The thematic discussion for this meeting was introduced by the Co-Chair of the Standing Committee on Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Reintegration (New Zealand), who noted that since the First Review Conference Co-Chairs have invested a great deal of energy into ensuring that victim assistance is treated with the same precision and seriousness as other core aims of the Convention. The Co-Chair recalled the comments of the ICBL and others at the First Review Conference that not enough was being done to meet the needs of survivors but also acknowledging that it was not known what the gaps in assistance were. Since that time Co-Chairs have been working closely with relevant States Parties to address this dilemma in a strategic manner.

In 2005, a questionnaire on victim assistance provided the foundation tool for the Co-Chairs to begin working with relevant States Parties to develop objectives and plans. At the First Review Conference, 24 States Parties reported responsibility for significant numbers of landmine survivors. These 24 States have been the focus of attention for the Standing Committee on Victim Assistance since 2005. Co-Chairs have worked with relevant ministries to develop SMART objectives to measure progress, which are specific and relevant to each particular State. Co-Chairs have conducted their work with relevant States on the basis that defining what can be and what should be achieved rests with each relevant State Party. States Parties are setting their own agendas by articulating in concrete terms what they want to achieve by December 2009 and beyond and their plans to achieve their objectives.

Clearly measuring progress in a quantifiable way is one of the challenges of the work on victim assistance. Unlike mine clearance or stockpile destruction, there are no immediately obvious indicators for demonstrating how far a country has progressed in terms of ensuring that adequate assistance is given to mine victims. However, through the methods applied since the First Review Conference – particularly by empowering and assisting relevant States Parties to set their own objectives – a lot has been accomplished.

The period between the First and Second Review Conference has provided a number of opportunities to assist States Parties in indicating or measuring progress. The Co-Chairs discussed these opportunities in addressing the question of how progress made in victim assistance can be recorded in a comprehensive five year review of the Convention at the Second Review Conference. First, there are broad goals that could be seen as achievable by the Second Review Conference, for example:

- that victim assistance in the context of the Convention will, to some extent, have become measurable;
- that there will be a body of evidence pointing to how the understandings on victim assistance agreed to at the First Review Conference will have been converted from words on paper and into action;

- that there will be a significantly clearer picture of the magnitude of the challenge as measured, at least, by a credible accounting of the number of survivors in each relevant State Party;
- that all 24 relevant States Parties will have engaged to some degree in a process of applying the understandings agreed to at the First Review Conference; and,
- that a solid basis should exist for what should be done during the next five year period of implementation to ensure that the States Parties meet expectations, in a measurable way, to landmine survivors.

Second, there are detailed State-specific measures of progress. Responses to the Victim Assistance questionnaire in 2005 provide a baseline from which to assess progress. The SMART objectives recorded in these responses are potential specific measures of progress.

Third, at a more general level, the Co-Chairs have developed a draft set of indicators which could be used in a variety of ways to indicate relative degrees of progress in fulfilling key aims.

The Co-Chair concluded that there is a wealth of opportunity to report, at the Second Review Conference, in more comprehensive manner than ever the state of victim assistance in the context of the Convention.

3. Follow-up on Discussions Related to Article 4 Implementation

The Chair recalled discussions that took place during the last meeting regarding ways to prevent further instances of States Parties failing to comply with Article 4 obligations by deadlines. The Co-Chair of the Standing Committee on Stockpile Destruction (Lithuania) presented some follow-up recommendations for the group to consider, including that States Parties that may be unable to meet their deadlines should act in an open and transparent manner, ensuring the communication of their situation, challenges, and future plans to all other States Parties; that they should be encouraged to make use of annual transparency reports to communicate progress that is being made; and, that Co-Chairs and other States Parties should be encouraged to take a more pro-active approach to cases of possible non-compliance from an earlier stage in order to prevent non-compliance.

There was general support for the Co-Chairs' initiative to proceed in presenting such recommendations to the 2-3 June 2008 meeting of the Standing Committee.

4. Report on the 14 May Resource Utilization Contact Group Workshop on Land Release

The Resource Utilization Contact Group Coordinator (Norway) reported on the workshop that was held on 14 May 2008 discussing land release and Article 5 obligations. The objectives of the workshop were: (a) To promote the further application of the full range of land release methods by States Parties with upcoming Article 5 deadlines to achieve complete implementation in as short a time as possible; (b) To take stock of the advances in the development of practices and standards and in understanding key principles; and, (c) To consider how these advances and principles could be brought to the attention of all States Parties with a view to ensuring more intensive application of them. The workshop was attended by a small but representative group of operators, mine-affected countries, donors, NGOs, UN organisations and the ICRC and saw excellent presentations and a frank and open exchange of views.

There was a general understanding amongst participants that past surveys such as the Landmine Impact Survey, had, in many cases, overestimated the suspected area and thus the magnitude of the landmine problem that needed to be addressed. This led to the inefficient use of resources

The Coordinator noted that it will work with the Co-Chairs of the Standing Committee on Mine Clearance to develop a draft concept paper on land release and Article 5 implementation to be presented during the June meeting of the Standing Committee. The Contact Group also intends to meet to discuss this paper in more detail on Thursday 5 June 2008.

5. Organisational Matters Concerning the 2-6 June Meetings of the Standing Committees

The Director of the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) briefed the Coordinating Committee on organizational aspects concerning the 2-6 June meetings and presented the template for reporting which has been used successfully by Co-Chairs and Co-Rapporteurs in the past. (See Annex I.) The published version of programme and documents issued to Permanent Missions of States and to the offices of relevant organisations was made available to the Coordinating Committee. The Co-Chairs of each Standing Committee were encouraged to engage with States Parties that are in the process of fulfilling, or have recently completed, obligations relevant to their Standing Committee to ensure they are aware of requests for updates to be provided.

6. Preparations for the 2-6 June Meetings of the Standing Committees

- Standing Committee on the General Status and Operation of the Convention: The Co-Chairs reported that States Parties have been invited to indicate their interest to serve as a Co-Rapporteur during the next intersessional period. Interested States Parties have been instructed to indicate their interest in writing to both Co-Chairs (Germany and Kenya) before 30 May, to allow for informal discussions to take place during the June meetings of the Standing Committees.
- Standing Committee on Stockpile Destruction: The Co-Chairs noted that are engaging States Parties that have either recently completed, are in the process of completing, or have been unable to complete, their Article 4 obligations, to ensure their participation in the June meetings.
- Standing Committee on Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Reintegration: The Co-Chairs highlighted that the experts' parallel programme will be taking place during the week of the June meetings and that the Co-Chairs would report back to the plenary on Friday 6 June.
- Standing Committee on Mine Clearance, Mine Risk Education and Mine Action Technologies: The Co-Chairs provided further information about their intentions for the June meeting which is set to include a presentation from the GICHD on Land Release and Mine Action Technologies, and a presentation from UNMAS on the International Mine Action Standards.

7. Updates on Activities of the Contact Group and Sponsorship Programme Coordinators

- Universalization Contact Group: The Chair reported that the previous week he had visited Singapore with the support of the ISU Director to open a dialogue with government officials on the Convention. The President and ISU Director met with the Deputy Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and with officials from the Ministry of Defence. During the visit, the President also delivered a speech at two leading academic institutions and met with embassy representatives of other States Parties that promote universalization in the region.

The Coordinator of the Universalization Contact Group (Canada) noted that the Contact Group would hold a meeting during lunch on Wednesday 4 June 2008.

- Article 7 Contact Group: The Coordinator (Belgium) noted that four initial reports remain outstanding and that two States which have recently acceded to the Convention – Kuwait and Palau – are due to submit their initial transparency reports later this year.
- Linking Mine Action and Development Contact Group: The Coordinator (Canada) noted the possibility of changes having to be made to the programme as it concerns the LMAD meeting due to availability of speakers.
- Sponsorship Programme: The ISU Director reported on behalf of the Coordinator of the Sponsorship Programme noting that 31 requests for sponsorship from 23 States Parties are being processed and that the sponsorship programme administrator is working in collaboration with the

UNDP to facilitate travel for those delegates who will come to the Standing Committee meetings directly from the Dublin meeting on cluster munitions.

8. Any other business

No participant took the floor under “any other business.”

9. Next meetings

It was agreed that the Coordinating Committee will next meet as follows:

- Tuesday 8 July, 13:00-15:00
- Friday 29 August, 13:00-15:00

Annex I: Template for Meeting Reports¹:

I. Introduction

The purpose of the introduction would be simply to contain about two pro forma paragraphs indicating: (a) on what basis the meeting took place; (b) who convened the meeting and with whose assistance; (c) where the meeting was held and with whose assistance; and, (d) how the meeting was organized.

II. Overview of the Status of Implementation

The purpose this section would be to summarize the general status of implementation of elements of the Convention that are relevant to the particular Standing Committee.

III. Update on Implementation Plans and Progress

The purpose of this section would be to contain a record of the most salient points made by affected States Parties of their problems, plans to deal with their problems and progress in addressing their problems. If relevant States not parties also spoke on these matters, perhaps this section could be divided into two to ensure a focus is placed on implementation of the Convention by States Parties to it.

IV. Update on Assistance and Cooperation

The purpose of this section would be (a) to contain a record of the most salient points made by States Parties and others of their assistance to and cooperation with affected States Parties and (b) record the essence of discussions on cooperation and assistance programmes. Like the preceding section, this one could be used as a general framework with further subdivisions created at the discretion of Co-Chairs.

V. Matters of a Thematic Nature Related to Implementation

The purpose of this section would be to report on discussions of a thematic nature that took place during the meeting.

VI. An Assessment of Needs that Remain

The purpose of this section would be for the Co-Chairs to describe, based upon the proceedings of the meeting, the areas of greatest priority in implementing provisions of the Convention related to the Committee.

VII. Other Matters

The purpose of this section would be, if necessary, to report on miscellaneous matters that the Co-Chairs may wish to record in their reports.

¹ This is relevant for the Co-Chairs / Co-Rapporteurs of the Standing Committees responsible for Stockpile Destruction, Mine Clearance and Victim Assistance.