

# REPORT AND PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE ENHANCEMENT OF COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE

23 JUNE 2015

## 1. Report on the Committee's Activities

### a. Introduction

The purpose of the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance is to assist the States Parties in the full implementation of Article 6 of the Convention. The Committee is mandated to promote cooperation and assistance, facilitate the fostering of partnerships, coordinate with other implementation mechanisms, present preliminary observations at intersessional meetings if need be, and present conclusions and recommendations, if relevant, at Meetings of the States Parties or Review Conferences.

### b. Work Plan of the Committee

At the beginning of its work, the Committee drafted a work plan for the period of 2014-2015. In principle, this Committee's work is based on past efforts and experiences, that is building upon the existing body of knowledge regarding how States Parties cooperate, what funding mechanisms exist, the distinction and balance between cooperation as concerns victim assistance and that concerning mine clearance. Furthermore, the Committee's work is guided by the 2014-2019 Maputo Action Plan.

To move the Committee's work forward, the Committee with the help of ISU, has set three goals and objectives in its work plan:

- i. The first goal is to promote partnerships between States Parties with needs and States Parties in a position to assist. Here, we should maximize the use of the existing Platform for Partnerships information exchange tool of which the establishment was initiated by Thailand and Albania as the first Co-Chairs of the Standing Committee on Resources, Cooperation and Assistance in 2012. Besides that, the Committee will serve as an intermediary between specific States Parties with needs and those in a position to provide assistance.
- ii. The second goal is to assist affected States Parties in enhancing their prospects for attracting assistance and donor States Parties in providing assistance, including by promoting good practices in national ownership, obtaining a better understanding of the challenges faced by States Parties with needs, and raising awareness of assistance needs.

To meet this goal, the Committee has identified a number of activities to be carried out such as discussing with States Parties about the challenges they may face in attracting and providing assistance; meeting with mine clearance operators to acquire better information on challenges in various countries; and organizing events to deepen understanding, provide an arena for regular dialogue, and engage with a wide range of actors. The Committee has also indicated possible examples for organizing events, realizing regular dialogues, and engaging wide range of actors such as briefing for all States Parties on how to optimize the use of various funding mechanisms for effective allocation of funds; dialogue for all delegations on how

new kinds of cooperation like triangular cooperation, south-south cooperation and engagement with private sector may be used complementing existing mechanisms; and seizing opportunities to establish regular dialogues between affected States Parties and donor States Parties.

The Committee has also envisaged the possibilities of engagement with assistance providers, exploring ways and means to diversify donors, exploring the establishment of funding mechanisms to channel assistance for the implementation of Article 6 on international cooperation and assistance in a balanced manner, and collaborating with other Committees within the Convention.

- iii. The third goal is to collaborate with others beyond the Convention with a view to multiplying the effect of cooperation and assistance efforts carried out under the Anti Personnel Mine Ban Convention. With this, the Committee foresees to work with those involved in cooperation and assistance in other Conventions such as Biological Weapons Convention, Cluster Munitions Convention, and Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons to exchange experiences and to identify synergies.

#### c. Activities

In executing its work, the Committee continuously draws upon the support provided by the ISU on how we could advance our work based on our work plan and guided by the Maputo Action Plan. Based on its work plan and in line with the working method of the Committee, the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance has carried out a number of activities as follows:

##### **Meeting with the International Campaign to Ban Landmines**

On 27 November 2014, the Committee met with Ms. Tamar Gabelnick and Ms. Amelie Chayer from International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) to acquire more and better information about challenges in various countries affected by mines. The ICBL has provided us with a priority list of affected States Parties that need to be approached in terms of mine clearance, victim assistance, and stockpile destruction.

##### **Meeting with Other Committees under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention**

On 1 December 2014, the Committee met with other Committees under the Convention, the Committee on Article 5 Implementation as well as the Committee on Victim Assistance to get significant information identified by both Committees on challenges that affected States Parties face both in terms of mine clearance and victim assistance as well as any possible needs of assistance. There are indeed 31 States Parties that are still in process of implementing Article 5 and 29 States Parties are still responsible for large number of mine victims. Since the work of the Convention's Committees is still at an early stage, more information will be needed particularly on the assistance needs required by affected States Parties. The efforts of other Committees to promote the full exchange of information in accordance with the Maputo Action Plan could surely highlight significant opportunities to enhance cooperation under the Convention.

##### **Meetings with Demining Organizations**

On 13 January 2015, the Committee together with the Committee on Article 5 Implementation, met with Mr. Calvin Ruysen, Southern Africa Desk Officer from HALO Trust,

a humanitarian landmine clearance organization. Mr. Ruysen shared with both Committees its mine clearance experiences in Angola, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. It is found out that Angola is still one of the world's most heavily mined countries. Moreover, there is a reduction in funding to HALO Trust to conduct mine clearance in Angola since 2008.

On 17 February 2015, the Committee together with the Committee on Article 5 Implementation, met with representatives of the Norwegian People's Aid that clearly highlighted that the era of 2015-2020 is the era of partnership. In terms of completion partnership, affected States Parties identified that need more capacity building are among others: Srilanka, Mozambique, South Sudan and Somalia. Malawi, Zambia and Guinea-Bissau were also identified as affected States Parties in need of more support.

On 18 February 2015, the Committee, together with the Committee on Article 5 Implementation, met with Mr. Chris Loughran, Director of Policy of the Mines Advisory Group who emphasized that there is not much assistance given to mine clearance. The biggest obstacle is how to highlight countries to continue funding in mine action, and to highlight countries with lack of funding.

#### **Meeting with Mine Affected States Parties**

On 17 February 2015, the Committee met with representatives of the National Mine Action Authority and Mine Action Centre of Zimbabwe that provided the Committee with information on landmine challenges in Zimbabwe. In terms of mine clearance efforts, Zimbabwe needs additional financial resources, support to capacitate its demining squadron, and assistance of mine clearance operators such as HALO Trust and Norwegian's People Aid to channel funding clearance.

On 18 February 2015, the Committee met with the representatives of the National Mine Action Centre of Sudan that described the challenges Sudan faces in its mine clearance efforts including lack of funding, natural phenomenon such as floods and heavy rain, and nonexistence of UN agencies in Sudan. Sudan asked the Committee's help to talk to UNMAS to start and continue its mine clearance work in Sudan.

#### **Meeting with Leading Donors in Mine Action**

On 19 February 2015, the Committee met with leading donors in mine action; the European Union, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Finland, Japan, Netherlands, Sweden, United Kingdom, and the United States. Most of the donors are in a position to enter into multi-year partnership agreements with mine-affected States. Some common ideas highlighted include the need to promote good practices in national ownership, the importance to enhance donor coordination, and the necessity to get clarity of information from affected States Parties.

Engagement with private sector is also suggested as a possibility of partnership that the Committee will look into.

#### **Upcoming Activities**

Following up the interactions that the Committee had with the above mentioned stakeholders as well as in line with the work plan and working method, in the near future the Committee is intended to do the following:

- The Committee will meet with Coordinators of Cooperation and Assistance under Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and Convention on Cluster Munitions to exchange experiences and identify synergies.
- The Committee will also explore the possibility of convening a joint meeting between affected States Parties and donor States.
- As requested by Sudan, the Committee also plans to approach UNMAS to start and continue its mine clearance work in Sudan.

**d. Platform for Partnerships**

In line with Action 24 of the Maputo Action Plan, all States Parties will contribute to the information exchange tool 'Platform for Partnerships' and will provide new or updated information on their needs for assistance or on assistance which they are in a position to offer. The Platform for Partnerships established in 2012 is a useful, simple, and cost effective information exchange tool incorporated into the convention's website, which allows the States Parties to share and consult updated information on financial assistance, equipment, expertise and experience, disaggregated by mine clearance and victim assistance, that the States Parties are in a position to provide. Financial support, of course, is very much needed, but the availability of equipment, expertise as well as best practices and sharing experiences, are also essential, and for this reason each State Party can be a potential contributor and partner. In the Committee's view, this simple and useful tool has the potential to support and develop the partnerships among the States Parties.

We thank those States Parties that have joined our Platform, and encourage all States Parties to provide new or updated information on assistance that they are in a position to provide, and invite them to make the best use of this information mechanism.

While the diminishment of the capacity of the ISU due to insufficient resources has delayed efforts to enhance the Platform for Partnerships, the ISU has begun to make the Platform more user-friendly and these enhancements should be completed in coming weeks.

**2. Preliminary Observations**

Based on the interactions of the Committee with different Convention stakeholders since post Maputo Review Conference until recently, the Committee wishes to present the following preliminary observations:

- a. International cooperation and assistance is a crucial part of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and represents a commitment shared by all States Parties to ensure the Convention's full implementation as enshrined in Article 6 of the Convention. Of the Maputo Action Plan's 31 Actions, 6 are dedicated to international cooperation and assistance for achieving the Convention's aims.

The appropriations from the UN General Assembly for mine action within 11 peacekeeping operations provided US\$ 150 million in 2013, an increase of 33% compared with 2012 (US\$ 113 million). However, there is a trend of decreasing amount of international contribution to the mine action. According to the ICBL, in 2013, international and national support for mine action reached US\$ 647 million, a decrease of US\$ 34 million (5%) from 2012 when the contributions recorded totalled US\$ 681 million. International assistance in 2013 was a

record of US\$ 446 million, a decrease of almost US\$ 51 million (10%) from 2012 (US\$ 497 million).

The insufficient, unpredictable and ad hoc financial support in mine action might affect States Parties' efforts in fulfilling their obligations to the Convention, particularly in the conduct of mine clearance operations, stockpile destruction and victim assistance. Insufficient, unpredictable and ad hoc financial support is also an issue for the ISU, which has modest costs but which falls short of its resource needs because not enough States Parties are sharing the burden of an indispensable support to us all.

- b. In view of the above, besides cooperation between donor States and mine-affected States, new kinds of cooperation forms may be explored further and better used to complement the existing mechanisms such as triangular cooperation, South-South cooperation, public private partnership, and non-traditional cooperation. The thematic discussion on fostering partnerships at this Intersessional Meetings will among others discuss complete range of partnerships and also focus on the role and potential of the private sector in providing support for demining.
- c. In order to enter into partnerships for completion, effective exchange of information between donor States and mine affected States is needed. In this regard, the donor States need relevant and accurate information on contamination and the socio-economic impact of anti-personnel mines. Cooperation and assistance amounts to both important rights and obligations under the Convention and constitutes the heart and soul of the Convention. States Parties have the right to seek and receive assistance where feasible, from other States Parties to the extent possible. States Parties in a position to do so shall provide assistance for mine victims, mine awareness programs such as mine risk education, mine clearance and related activities, and the destruction of stockpiled anti-personnel mines.
- d. Cooperation and assistance does not only relate to financial support. It also relates to the efficient and effective use of scarce resources. In this regard, the Platform for Partnership established in 2012 is timely to exchange information on the breadth of assistance available to implement the Convention. Other forms of assistance besides financial support are indeed valuable such as availability of expertise, provision of equipment, exchange of experience, technical know-how, and best practices sharing.

### **3. Expectations**

What could be the expected results of the work of this Committee? We hope that enhanced partnership between States Parties with needs and States Parties in a position to assist will be established, the Platform for Partnerships could be better used, and there will be increased understanding on challenges faced by States Parties with needs and on ways and means to attract assistance.

As the desired impact of the Committee's work, the Committee hopes that cooperation and assistance under the Convention continues to flourish as well as significant and sustainable progress of the achievement of Maputo Action Plan could be realized.