

ICRC intervention
Standing Committee on Resources, Cooperation and Assistance
Mine Ban Treaty Intersessional meeting, Friday 24 June 2011

Ensuring a high level of efficiency in cooperation and assistance

The ICRC welcomes this discussion on ensuring efficiency in cooperation and assistance. As we have said before access to, and the efficient use of, resources are central to overcoming the major challenges this Convention currently faces.

We have two key points to make on this topic.

Firstly, after 10 years of implementation, it is unfortunate that some affected still do not know where, when and how to access assistance from specific donors. As already mentioned this morning by the delegate from Australia, the ICRC believes this Committee could assist States Parties to be more effective in their claims for cooperation and assistance if information on available mechanisms could be centralised and shared with States Parties, or at least be readily accessible through the Standing Committee.

We support the proposal by Argentina, Indonesia and Thailand that potential donors, including those in a position to provide non-financial resources or south-south co-operation, could provide to the Committee information on relevant cooperation and assistance mechanisms and areas of engagement, funding cycles and contact points. This information could then be kept in a catalogue or database available to States Parties. To be effective, this database would of course need to be kept up to date so all contributing states and institutions would need to take some responsibility to provide regular updated information.

The second point the ICRC would like to make concerns clearance activities under Article 5 of the Convention. We fully agree that national ownership is a key element of successful long-term and large-scale mine action activities and programmes. As the ICRC stated at the recent meeting in Tirana, national capacity building is also an essential dimension of successful victim assistance programmes.

However, in the ICRC's experience, capacity building is not always necessary for small-scale or localised mine clearance. In these areas, the most efficient use of resources may be the engagement of an external contractor with the relevant expertise, working in collaboration with the national authority or coordinating body.

Our point here is not at all to diminish the importance of national ownership but to emphasise the need to ensure the most rapid and effective response to each identified problem. By ensuring timely clearance, both the affected State Party and the donor are fulfilling their obligations under the Convention, ensuring that the number of future victims of AP mines is reduced to an absolute minimum and, eventually, to zero.

Thank you.