

MBC ISC 2013. Norwegian Intervention on Universalisation.

Thank you Chair.

Following the interesting introduction by Belgium, we wish to offer some additional perspectives also related to universalization.

The now 161 State Parties to the Land Mine Convention serve as a testimony to its relevance and importance. The norm prohibiting all use is getting stronger by the year and is respected also by states not party to the Convention.

15 years of implementation of the Convention in an increasing number of affected states has altered the structure and magnitude of the global mine problem, from an acute and international humanitarian crisis to a manageable problem on a national level. This is not to say the problem is over and the job is done, far from it, a number of countries still have mine clearance obligations and some countries still have serious problems. But the implementation challenges are quite different now than a decade ago.

In the early days of the Convention it was critical to build a robust and flexible multilateral implementation support environment. We achieved this with the successful Implementation Support Unit, the innovative intersessional work program reinforcing the partnerships between states and NGOs and the active and participative leadership by States Parties.

If we look at the coming five – ten year period, the implementation support needs will be different than before. In states with article 5 obligations and obligations towards landmine survivors, the main obstacles to compliance are found primarily on the national level and to a lesser degree on the multilateral level. Mine clearance and victim assistance efforts entails the involvement of a broad range of national actors, supported in their efforts by the international community.

The broad and general discussions we have in the many formal and informal meetings of the convention can only address such country specific challenges to a limited extent. We see this as many of the thematic discussions are starting to be repetitive, and, at times, irrelevant to the specific obstacles on the ground.

Large multilateral meetings are expensive, both as direct financial costs and indirect costs like time spent away from office and field. The period of generous funding for all aspects of mine action, including for meetings like this, is drawing to an end. As a community committed to work for a mine free world, we need to critically review what will be the best use of resources in the years to come. This includes looking at issues such as meeting frequencies, type of meetings and time allocated to each meeting. At the same time, we need to retain a formal forum for reporting for State Parties, granting of extension requests and similar issues using the established verification mechanism which includes active State Parties, NGOs and ICRC.

Madame/Mr Chair.

The very success of the universalization has altered the implementation environment. Our discussions prior to, and the decisions made at, the 3rd Review Conference need to reflect these changes, in order for this treaty to maintain its status as innovative, flexible and as a practical framework for action to solve the global landmine problem at a national and local level. At the end of the day, that will be a significant argument for new states to join our convention.

Thank you