

President's opening statement – Standing Committees of the Mine Ban Convention

23 April 2007

Excellencies, distinguished colleagues, it is a pleasure to open this Meeting of the Standing Committees of the Mine Ban Convention.

This week we will hear about the progress made by states parties in implementing the Convention as well as the work of international and non-governmental organisations to take forward our common objectives.

April 2007 is the half way point between the Convention's First and Second Review Conferences. At the First Review Conference in Nairobi, states parties adopted a comprehensive plan to guide their work and to ensure progress in the pursuit of the Convention's aims by 2009. We have made some notable gains. But significant challenges lie ahead in the next two and a half years. The meeting this week will give us all the opportunity to focus on what needs to be done to meet them.

2007 also represents the Convention's tenth anniversary. A number of states parties and organisations are conducting events to recapture global attention about the threat anti-personnel mines pose to people around the world. The way to eradicate this threat remains through the full implementation of the Mine Ban Convention.

I wish everyone a very successful meeting.