

**Update on the Implementation Support Unit
by the Ambassador Martin Dahinden
Director of the GICHD**

Mr. President,
Dear friends and colleagues,

One year ago I had the privilege of informing you that all necessary steps had been taken to commence the operations of the Implementation Support Unit. Over the past year, we have worked hard to ensure that the ISU meets the expectations you had for it when you mandated its establishment.

The purpose of the ISU is to provide you – the States Parties – with professional independent services in support of your responsibilities related to the general operation and implementation of the Convention. I am well aware of the importance of your responsibilities. Thus it is an honour for the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining to serve you – through the ISU – as well, I should mention, through the support provided by the Centre's expert technical personnel.

Many of you by now are familiar on a first-hand basis with the services available through the ISU. However, I would like to highlight for you some matters that are relatively new:

In accordance with the mandate of the ISU, we have taken steps to establish a documentation centre, which you will find located on the third floor of this building in the offices of the GICHD. This facility contains over 2,000 reports, statements, publications and other documents related to the establishment of the Convention and its subsequent implementation. Many actors have assisted in the establishment of the documentation centre and I am thankful to them all. I would like to highlight, though, my gratitude for the contributions of documents made by those States Parties that hosted important meetings related to the Ottawa Process – Canada, Austria, Germany, Belgium and Norway, as well as my thanks for the cooperation of the ICRC, the ICBL and the Geneva Branch of the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs.

With regard to the financing of the ISU, a budget for the ISU for 2003 was prepared by the GICHD and it was subsequently distributed to all States Parties by Ambassador Lint. In his letter to you, Ambassador Lint highlighted that when you agreed to call for the establishment of the Unit it was noted that the States Parties would take responsibility for assuring necessary financial resources were provided for the ISU's operations. I am pleased to report that several States Parties have accepted this collective responsibility. Since its establishment, 10 States Parties have provided financial contributions to the ISU Trust Fund: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Ireland, Italy, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway and South Africa. In addition, several other States Parties have written or spoken to us

to indicate their intentions to contribute.

Concerning the staffing of the ISU, you will recall that the 2003 budget for the ISU indicated that the ISU should remain small in number of staff and that in a manner consistent with this provision the staffing of the ISU in 2003 would remain with its de facto level in the second half of 2002. In this context, I am pleased to inform you that an *Implementation Support Officer*, Ms. Sophie Delfolie, had been hired and has joined the full-time ISU Manager, Mr. Kerry Brinkert, and the ISU's half-time Administrative Assistant, Ms. Véronique Movilla.

Let me close by reiterating my deep pleasure in being able to be of service to you. The effort to implement the Convention remains an incredible and unique process in the world of multilateral affairs. It is a privilege to be able to make a contribution to this great effort.