



Special Session on International Cooperation and Assistance

Friday 25 June 2010
10:00 to 13:00

Background and Agenda

Presented by the President of the Second Review Conference and Chair of the Coordinating Committee, Ambassador Susan Eckey of Norway

Background:

One of the most significant outcomes of the 2009 Cartagena Summit on a Mine-Free World was the strong interest expressed by States Parties and others in placing an increased focus on international cooperation and assistance. Given this high level of interest in an essential part of the Convention, the Co-Chairs and I have agreed that a special session on cooperation and assistance will be held during the week of the meetings of the Standing Committees, specifically on Friday 25 June from 10:00 to 13:00.

While some in Cartagena advocated the establishment of a new Standing Committee to devote itself to cooperation and assistance, my hope is that we would not at this stage debate the pros and cons of establishing such a body. Rather, I see that the purpose of the informal session on 25 June is to identify key issues and questions on how to strengthen and improve international assistance and cooperation for Article 5 implementation, victim assistance and other relevant matters – in accordance with the Cartagena Action Plan. That is, the informal session could be an important test for how cooperation and assistance could be handled either by a new Standing Committee or through other means.

In order to ensure fruitful discussions in June, I invited the Co-Chairs and Co-Rapporteurs along with experts from the field to a one day workshop on 20 May. This workshop helped me in framing what I believe are useful discussion questions, which are embedded into the agenda for the 25 June special session. In addition, the input of the Co-Chairs and Co-Rapporteurs confirmed in my mind that we need two distinct discussions – one that concerns Article 5 implementation and one that concerns victim assistance. While both matters belong to the larger family of mine action, mine clearance and victim assistance, these issues have different timelines, involve distinct national and international actors and relate to different national institutional and regulatory frameworks and budget lines. It may even be that the whole notion of mine action as an integrated field of practice has hampered attempts to utilise available resources in the most effective manner. There is also a need for an increased focus on results in addition to demands for increased efficiency and effectiveness. This will be another important point of departure for our discussion.

My hope is that the 25 June session will feature a vibrant discussion on the basis of the questions that I have posed and which are contained in the agenda for this session. Longer discussion papers

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have also been developed to help prepare participants by providing context and summarising key issues. In addition, I seek your input regarding whether these are the right questions we should be considering and if there are others that should be raised as well. The session should result in greater clarity regarding a possible programme of work for the near term as concerns international cooperation and assistance without prejudging how the States Parties may wish to carry out this work, be it through a Standing Committee or through other means.

Agenda for the 25 June Special Session

10:00 1. Introductory remarks & overview of the purpose of the session

- *President of the Second Review Conference and Chair of the Coordinating Committee, Ambassador Susan Eckey of Norway*

2. International cooperation and assistance: victim assistance

- *Within States that are in a position to assist, a wide range of actors may actually play a role in supporting activities that are consistent with the aim of assisting the victims, with the main ones being those who have responsibility for bilateral cooperation as concerns enhancing other States' healthcare systems, physical rehabilitation programmes, mental health services, the exercise of rights by persons with disabilities, etc. However, these actors, who likely are responsible for the bulk of what truly amounts to resources for victim assistance-related efforts, do not for the most part participate in the work of the Convention. How can we gain greater clarity regarding the true magnitude of the effort being made to assist States Parties that are responsible for significant numbers of landmine victims in developing the responses necessary to meet the needs of all individuals who are injured and who live with disabilities?*
- *Given the above, what is typically reported as "victim assistance funding" probably amounts to a small portion of what is actually being generated to ultimately enhance the lives and guarantee the rights of landmine victims. However, this still amounts to hundreds of millions of dollars having been invested in recent years. What difference has been made as a result of this investment? What lessons have we learned?*
- *Given that "assisting the victims" exists within broader healthcare, social services, development and human rights contexts, what is the role (and the extent of the role) of the AP Mine Ban Convention in addressing what amounts to a profound set of challenges to overcome in many countries?*
- *At the Cartagena Summit, the States Parties defined and remarked on the importance of national ownership as concerns Article 5 implementation. What is expected of affected States in terms of "national ownership" as concerns victim assistance?*
- *What specific blockages do States Parties that are responsible for significant numbers of survivors face in being able to mobilise resources internally and from international sources?*
- *Article 32 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) spells out measures concerning international cooperation and assistance. How can States Parties to the AP Mine Ban Convention – whether they are party to the CRPD or not – ensure coherence in acting upon the cooperation and assistance provisions of both Conventions?*

3. International cooperation and assistance: Article 5 implementation

- *The Convention is founded on partnerships – between states, international organisations and NGOs – and between those affected and those in a position to assist, at the international level, at the national level as well as at community levels. How can we make these partnerships more effective in support of Article 5 implementation?*
- *The States Parties have defined national ownership and recognised that it is essential for effective implementation of Article 5. In Cartagena, the States Parties in the process of implementing Article 5 committed to take full national ownership of their Article 5 obligations and set out concrete, time bound steps to be taken in this regard, including the development of national strategies, policies, plans and legal frameworks. What are the impediments to national ownership and how can they be overcome?*

How can States Parties in a position to assist, the UN and NGOs contribute to strengthening national ownership? Are particular mechanisms for funding, partnerships, capacity building and coordination more conducive to facilitating national ownership than others? Can efforts be made to increase the efficiency of various funding mechanisms and increase speed of the flow of funds through these mechanisms?

- *The distribution of resources for mine clearance is uneven. Over the past years a few states have received relatively large proportions of total funding for mine clearance compared to the larger group of affected States Parties. What can we do to ensure that the distribution of resources better reflects actual needs?*
- *The expected decline in international funding for mine action over the coming five years means that States Parties with Article 5 obligations have to both find new sources of support and spend money more efficiently. Technical cooperation, in-kind contributions and increased South-South cooperation could contribute to sustained and perhaps more efficient Article 5 implementation. How can States Parties, the UN and NGOs increase efficiency and improve cooperation in support of Article 5 implementation? How can non-traditional actors, for example from the private sector, support Article 5 efforts?*
- *Discussions on resources for Article 5 implementation have often focussed on financial contributions in support of global mine action, but there is a need to move beyond this focus and also explore other forms of cooperation to meet Article 5 implementation challenges. How should we structure future discussions in order to reflect these challenges?*

4. International cooperation and assistance: other relevant matters

- *For two States Parties, completing implementation of Article 4 concerns, to large degree, concluding bilateral arrangements with the European Union. However, compliance on the part of these States Parties is of interest to all. Therefore, how can the States Parties as a whole help facilitate cooperation and assistance to ensure that these two States Parties can successfully and as soon as possible conclude their stockpile destruction programmes?*
- *Amongst the States not parties identified by the Universalization Contact Group Coordinator as being most likely to accede to the Convention in the near term are some*

that may need assistance in destroying stockpiled anti-personnel mines. Are the States Parties ready to respond to any new requests for assistance in this area?

- *What other matters concerning international cooperation and assistance should the States Parties consider exploring?*

5. Closing remarks & next steps

- *President of the Second Review Conference and Chair of the Coordinating Committee, Ambassador Susan Eckey of Norway*

13:00 6. Special session ends