

NORWEGIAN STATEMENT

-MINE CLEARANCE

Innlegg om Minerydding, 23 juni 2010.

Gracias.

El viernes pasado, Nicaragua se unía con honor y con valor a los países que han logrado desminar su territorio. Está bien merecido celebrar y congratular a Nicaragua que ha declarado a su territorio libre de minas, y así haber cumplido la implementación del Artículo 5 de la Convención. El declarar el país libre de minas antipersonal es un logro trascendental que merece nuestro reconocimiento y nuestras felicitaciones.

En Nicaragua se inició la tarea complicada y peligrosa de proceder a desminar su territorio años antes de que entró en vigor la Convención. Con su compromiso político y con sus propios esfuerzos, en colaboración con la OEA y algunos países amigos, han podido mostrar que lo *imposible* de deshacerse de este flagelo se ha hecho *posible*, además que demuestra el valor que tiene la cooperación internacional.

Pero no termina allí. Quedan todavía los retos para satisfacer mejor las necesidades de los muchos sobrevivientes de minas antipersonal. Se ha puesto en relieve en muchos países afectados, también en Nicaragua, la increíble capacidad de los sobrevivientes. Ahora hace falta continuar la asistencia a las víctimas en rehabilitación física y psicológica. Pero más aun un apoyo acertado para su integración a la vida social y económica.

Mr. Co - Chair

Over the past two days we have heard updates from states parties with Article 5 obligations, including those that have been granted extensions to their original clearance deadlines. It is encouraging to see that mine clearance progresses and that use of more effective and efficient methods results in more cleared land. We are moving in the right direction.

At the same time, we are concerned that fulfilling Article 5 obligations takes too long in too many affected states parties. As a result we see too many Article 5 extensions. When the Convention was negotiated in 1997 the extension provision was included as an exceptional provision for some of the most heavily affected states, for whom ten years would not be sufficient to fulfil their obligations to clear all mined areas.

While some states parties indeed do have good and justifiable reasons for applying for extensions, we are concerned that in many instances, delayed compliance with Article 5 obligations is a result of too little effort, too little resources, and too little political will. The focus seems to have been on the deadline as such rather than on the obligation to clear all mined areas as soon as possible.

While mine clearance has evolved impressively over the past decade, we still spend many resources on actions that do not directly result in identification and clearance of mined areas. Insufficient funding is put forward as one of the primary reasons for lack of mine clearance progress. While we need to continue to advocate for sustained funds for mine clearance, we have to look at other aspects of securing resources for continued, effective and sustained mine clearance. This includes exploring how current mine clearance programmes and the management of them are organised, how we can improve technical cooperation and the importance of making mine clearance a national priority.

The Cartagena Action Plan provides us with clear guidance on all these issues. Of these I would like to highlight Action number 14, which calls on states with Article 5 obligations to report the precise locations and perimeters of *all* mined or suspected mined areas under their jurisdiction and control, to the extent this is possible, to the upcoming 10th Meeting of States Parties. This information, combined with a clearer understanding of the resources needed to clear these areas, would be a substantive contribution to our common understanding of the remaining Article 5 challenges.

The main obligation of Article 5 is to clear all mined areas *as soon as possible*. While the primary responsibility for this lies with the affected state, all states parties in a position to so have a responsibility to assist them in this effort. The way we as states parties interpret and implement Article 6 over the coming years will be crucial to successful Article 5 compliance.

Norway has supported humanitarian mine clearance for more than 15 years, and we will continue to do so. The way we have provided such support has changed over the years. Earlier this year we concluded a strategic long-term partnership agreement with Mozambique in support of their national plan to complete their Article 5 obligations. The agreement is comprehensive and includes provisions of technical and political cooperation as well as financial aspects. The agreement allows us to combine funds from different budget lines and has provided us with opportunities for constructive dialogue with Mozambique on their mine action efforts. This is a new way for Norway to structure mine action assistance, and we will make use of this experience in the future. We believe that targeted partnerships like this can be one way towards more effective mine clearance in the coming years.

Thank you.