

REPORT ON THE FUNCTIONING OF THE IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT UNIT, NOVEMBER 2009 to NOVEMBER 2010

Submitted by the Director of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining

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Background

1. At the Third Meeting of the States Parties (3MSP) in September 2001, the States Parties endorsed the President's Paper on the Establishment of the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) and mandated the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) to establish the ISU. The 3MSP also encouraged States Parties in a position to do so to make voluntary contributions in support of the ISU. In addition, the States Parties mandated the President of the 3MSP, in consultation with the Coordinating Committee, to finalise an agreement between the States Parties and the GICHD on the functioning of the ISU. The GICHD's Foundation Council accepted this mandate on 28 September 2001.
2. An agreement on the functioning of the ISU was finalised between the States Parties and the GICHD on 7 November 2001. This agreement indicates that the Director of the GICHD shall submit a written report on the functioning of the ISU to the States Parties and that this report shall cover the period between two Meetings of the States Parties. This report has been prepared to cover the period between the Second Review Conference and the Tenth Meeting of the States Parties (10MSP).

Report

General support and publications:

3. On the basis of the direction received from the Coordinating Committee, in 2010 the ISU provided the support consistent with that provided in 2009. This included advising States Parties on matters related to implementation and compliance and furnishing information or assistance in maximising participation in the Convention's implementation processes. The ISU received hundreds of requests in 2010 from State Parties on matters related to implementation and compliance. In particular, immediately in advance of the June 2010 meetings of the Standing Committees and the 10MSP, the ISU responded to dozens of requests to furnish information or to provide advice or assistance.
4. The ISU provided strategic direction to Co-Chairs, the Coordinating Committee and the Coordinator of the Sponsorship Programme. The ISU supported six meetings of the Coordinating Committee and dozens of small group planning meetings. A proposed strategic plan for the Coordinator of the Sponsorship Programme was developed twice – once in the lead up to the meetings of the Standing Committees and once in the lead up to the 10MSP.
5. The ISU continued its efforts in supporting States Parties in preparing transparency reports, responding to dozens of requests for assistance. As well, the ISU supported the Coordinator of the Article 7 Contact Group by providing information and assisting in developing strategies.

6. The ISU was called upon on numerous occasions to lead seminars and provide training on understanding the Convention, or aspects of it, and its operations. Highlights included participation in the United Nations' annual meeting of national mine action directors, in the United Nations' Disarmament Fellowship Training Programme, in international training courses for senior mine action managers which were organised by Jordan and by James Madison University's Mine Action Information Centre, in regional or special seminars organised by the GICHD, NATO and the Croatian-based Centre for Security Cooperation, and in seminars for new diplomats which were organized by the GICHD and the Geneva Forum.
7. The ISU supported the President and individual States Parties in undertaking universalisation efforts, including by providing information and strategic advice to the Coordinator of the Universalization Contact Group, assisting the President's "Special Envoy on the Universalisation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention", and liaising with the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) and its member organisations, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the United Nations and individual States Parties.
8. The ISU supported preparations for both the Tenth and Eleventh Meetings of the States Parties, including by providing advice and support to the President-Designate of the 10MSP and carrying out a joint 11MSP planning mission to Phnom Penh with the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs.
9. Pursuant to its communications and liaison mandate, the ISU continued to serve as the main source of information on the Convention, maintaining the Convention's Documentation Centre, receiving and making available hundreds of new documents in 2010 related to the implementation process. In addition, the ISU produced publications containing the programmes and information on the Intersessional Work Programme and on the 10MSP and updated its background brochure on the Convention.
10. In terms of liaison, the ISU placed a heavy emphasis on enhancing partnerships with organisations whose activities are supportive of the pursuit of the States Parties aims including by carrying out two liaison visits to deepen collaboration with the United Nations and various non-governmental organisations. In addition, the ISU sought to broaden collaboration on victim assistance to include a number of actors that do not regularly participate in the work of the Convention, including the World Health Organisation, the International Labour Organisation, the International Disability and Development Consortium and the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.
11. The ISU again was called upon extensively to advise on applying, in other areas, the lessons learned from implementing the Convention. The ISU responded to several requests from States and others, particularly in the context of efforts to implement the Convention on Cluster Munitions, the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).
12. At the Second Review Conference, the States Parties agreed to proceed with an evaluation of the ISU. While the ISU was not involved in the evaluation, the evaluation had a significant impact on ISU staff resources in terms of the demands placed upon the ISU to furnish information to the independent evaluator and to individual States Parties,

to distribute and otherwise make available information related to the evaluation and to administer the contract for the independent evaluator.

Article 5 implementation support:

13. A specific area of support that the ISU continued to provide in 2010 concerns Article 5 extension requests. In 2006, the States Parties agreed to encourage States Parties requesting extensions in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention “as necessary, to seek assistance from the Implementation Support Unit in the preparation of their requests.” In 2010, the ISU provided advice to each of the six States Parties that submitted an Article 5 extension request this year and four States Parties that are likely to submit requests in 2010, including by carrying out six advisory missions. In addition the ISU provided advice to one State Party in the preparation of a declaration of completion of Article 5 implementation, supported a State Party at a national “mine action summit”, provided in-country advice to one State Party on the application of the Cartagena Action Plan and responded to numerous requests for individual States Parties seeking information or support in the implementation of Article 5.

Support to the Article 5 extensions process:

14. Another specific area of support provided by the ISU in 2010 concerns the process agreed to by the States Parties in 2006 that sees the President, Co-Chairs and Co-Rapporteurs mandated to analyse Article 5 extension requests. The ISU supported five meetings or sets of meetings of the Article 5 analysing group and undertook follow up actions at the request of the group and the President.

Victim assistance implementation support:

15. An additional area of specific support that the ISU continued to provide in 2010 concerns victim assistance. At the 2004 First Review Conference, the States Parties adopted understandings on victim assistance that provided a basis for the States Parties to act strategically in this area. Successive Co-Chairs have responded by requesting the support of the ISU to assist those States Parties responsible for significant numbers of landmine survivors in applying the 2004 understandings. This work began in 2005 on a project basis (i.e., a fixed time period during which clear-cut objectives would be achieved), funded outside of the ISU Trust Fund by a small number of interested States Parties. As support to States Parties on victim assistance has become a core programmatic area of work for the ISU, in 2010 advisory services on victim assistance were incorporated into the 2010 ISU budget for the first time.
16. The ISU carried out 11 advisory visits in response to requests by States Parties that are responsible for significant numbers of landmine survivors and which wish to meet one of the following objectives: (a) for those with good victim assistance objectives, to develop good plans; (b) for those with underdeveloped objectives, to develop more concrete objectives; (c) for those with good plans, to advance implementation of these plans, (d) for those that have engaged little to date in applying the understandings agreed to by the States Parties, to achieve a higher level of engagement, and, (e) for all, to develop monitoring mechanisms. In addition, the ISU visited one other State Party to discuss the application of the Cartagena Action Plan’s victim assistance commitments.

17. ISU support concerning victim assistance also involved ISU participation in thematic conferences, workshops and seminars in Vienna, Sarajevo and London. In addition the ISU was invited to deliver a presentation to the CRPD's Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Geneva. As well, the ISU supported the Co-Chair of the Standing Committee on Victim Assistance in organisation an experts' visit to Turkey's leading physical rehabilitation facility.

Enhanced activities in addition to the ISU's core work plan

18. In keeping with past practice, the ISU executed other activities, in a manner consistent with its mandate, when additional funds were made available to fully fund these efforts (including funding any additional human resource costs). With funds made available by Australia, the ISU began carrying out enhanced victim assistance efforts in support of national efforts by two States Parties, organised victim assistance experts' programmes parallel to the meetings of the Standing Committees and the 10MSP and began work on a guide to understanding the Convention's victim assistance provision in the broader context of disability.

19. In 2010, the ISU was able to provide enhanced support to the Presidency with funds made available by Norway. This support in part enabled the ISU to support the activities of the President's Special Envoy on the Universalization of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention.

20. During the first four months of 2010, with funds provided by the European Union (EU), the ISU completed implementation of the EU Joint Action in support of the universalisation and implementation of the Convention. Resources provided enabled the ISU to extend the reach of its support to individual States Parties in addressing pressing implementation challenges.

Staffing

21. The staffing of the ISU in 2010 included a director, a mine action implementation specialist, a victim assistance implementation specialist, an implementation support specialist, an implementation support officer and an administrative assistant. At peak periods, the ISU engaged part-time staff on a short term basis, including to support communications efforts related to the 10MSP. In addition, the ISU continued to engage interns, both to acquire additional no / low cost support and as part of broader outreach efforts.

ISU Staffing 2010

Staff Position	Full-time equivalent
Director	1.0
Mine Action Implementation Specialist	1.0
Implementation Support Specialist	0.8
Victim Assistance Specialist	1.0
Implementation Support Officer	1.0
Administrative Assistant	0.5
Total	5.3

Financing

Financing of the ISU's core work plan

22. As indicated in the President's Paper on the Establishment of the Implementation Support Unit and the agreement between the States Parties and the GICHD, the GICHD created a Voluntary Trust Fund for activities of the ISU in late 2001. The purpose of this fund is to finance the on-going activities of the ISU, with the States Parties endeavouring to assure the necessary financial resources. In accordance with the agreement between the States Parties and the GICHD, the ISU Trust Fund's 2009 financial statement was independently audited by PriceWaterhouseCoopers. The audit indicated that the financial statement of the Trust Fund had been properly prepared in accordance with relevant accounting policies and the applicable Swiss legislation. The audited financial statement, which indicated that the 2009 expenditures of the ISU totalled CHF 981,768.49 and that the ISU Trust Fund had a balance of CHF 258,176 as of 31 December 2009, was forwarded to the President, the Coordinating Committee and contributors to the ISU Trust Fund.
23. Given the financial challenges faced by the ISU in 2009, the President, in 2010, placed a priority on monitoring the ISU's finances. Updates were provided at each meeting of the Coordinating Committee. In addition, the President wrote twice to all States Parties to encourage them to provide contributions to the ISU. On 7 September 2010, the Director of the ISU informed the Coordinating Committee that, while the ISU should have the resources necessary to complete most of its intended work plan in 2010, cuts would have to be made. The Director indicated that a structural change would need to be made that would result in a significant cut in support that the States Parties have come to expect and appreciate – in-country victim assistance advisory services and a dedicated expert advisory service in Geneva. The Coordinating Committee was informed in particular that as of 1 December 2010, the position of "victim assistance specialist" would no longer be staffed and it would remain vacant until such a time as States Parties provide the necessary resources to cover the costs of this position and related services.
24. Also on 7 September 2010, the Director of the ISU expressed to the Coordinating Committee his hope that the ISU could return to a staffing and service level that States Parties have come to expect as the norm, noting that even this level of staffing leaves the ISU far short of meeting demands from individual States Parties for victim assistance advisory services and far short of fulfilling the potential to provide advisory services to Article 5 implementing States Parties well before Article 5 deadlines.
25. It is projected that expenses related to the ISU's 2010 core work plan will total approximately CHF 1,100,000 (i.e., approximately CHF 100,000 under budget). As of 23 November, contributions had been received in 2010 from the following States Parties: Albania, Australia, Austria, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Denmark, Indonesia, Italy, Malaysia, Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, Thailand and Turkey. In addition, contributions are expected from Belgium and Sweden on the basis of agreements that are in place. When these contributions are added to the carry-over from 2009 to 2010, total revenue in 2010 is projected to be approximately CHF 1,200,000. Hence, the carry-over from 2010 to 2011 is projected to be approximately CHF 100,000.

Financing of enhanced activities carried out by the ISU

26. With respect to the enhanced activities mentioned above, CHF 248,888.89 was received from Norway to provide enhanced support to the Presidency, the enhanced victim assistance activities supported by Australia span a period 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011 and are valued at approximately CHF 225,000, and, with respect to the EU Joint Action, the ISU incurred costs in 2010 totalling approximately €125,000.

Financing of the ISU evaluation

27. As noted, the ISU was asked to administer the contract with independent evaluator of the ISU. To date contributions totalling approximately CHF 55,000 have been received from Albania, Canada, Germany, New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland. These contributions have resulted in the ISU evaluation having been fully funded.

GICHD support to the ISU, to the Intersessional Work Programme and to the Sponsorship Programme

28. Costs for basic infrastructure and services in support of the ISU (office space, information technology, telecommunications, postage, publications coordination, travel support, human resources management, accounting, audit and other administrative support, etc.) are covered by the GICHD general budget, on the basis of funds provided by Switzerland, and were estimated at approximately CHF 380,000 in 2010.
29. While costs associated with providing substantive support to the Presidency and Co-Chairs in preparing the Intersessional Work Programme are covered by the ISU budget, costs totalling CHF 150,000 related to facility, interpretation and organisational matters concerning the Intersessional Work Programme were covered by the GICHD budget, again on the basis of funds provided by Switzerland.
30. While costs associated with providing strategic direction to the Sponsorship Programme are covered by the ISU budget, costs related to the administration of the Sponsorship Programme are covered by the GICHD budget, again on the basis of funds provided by Switzerland. The value of these costs was estimated at approximately CHF 40,000 in 2010.

