

Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention

16th Meeting of States Parties

Vienna 18-21 December 2017

Statement of Australia on International Cooperation and Assistance

Australia recognises the challenges faced by affected countries and is committed to providing support to these countries to help them meet their obligations under the Convention.

Australia thanks the Committee on International Cooperation and Assistance for promoting the individualised approach, the Platform for Partnerships and mapping needs and challenges. These all represent important innovations in support of the operation and implementation of the Convention.

Australia is committed to supporting the implementation of this Convention and other international action towards a world free of landmines and other explosive remnants of war.

Last year Australia's total expenditure on mine action was approximately \$15,000,000.

Australia's has a three-pronged approach to providing support.

Australia funds international agencies working globally across all areas of mine action including in mine clearance, risk education and victim assistance including the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Handicap International.

Through bilateral programmes, we fund clearance work in affected countries. In June 2016 we contributed \$5 million to UNMAS's humanitarian and stabilisation activities in Iraq. We are pleased to be able to inform the meeting that the Australian Government will provide \$11 million to UNMAS's Iraq project over the next three years as part of our \$100 million commitment to humanitarian relief and stabilisation of Iraq. We have a five-year, \$9 million project in Cambodia, building on a long partnership with that country's peak body for monitoring and coordinating mine action activities, the Cambodian Mine Action and Victims Assistance Authority (CMAA). We also support victim assistance efforts in Cambodia through support to the Disability Rights Initiative Cambodia. This year we will complete a three-year \$3 million project to clear unexploded ordnance in Palau.

Australia also supports the effective operation of the Convention through our role as sponsorship coordinator and an annual contribution of \$35,000 to the sponsorship programme. Australia extends its thanks to the other states parties that have contributed to the sponsorship programme.

The programme has enabled delegates from a number of affected states to attend this meeting. We will provide further details on the sponsorship programme in our coordinator's report to the meeting tomorrow. We encourage states parties who are able to contribute to this programme to do so in order to facilitate the full participation of all states parties in the operation of the Convention.

Australia also makes an annual voluntary contribution of \$140,000 to the Mine Ban Convention Implementation Support Unit.

The challenge of identifying the needs of affected states parties and matching them to donors is a challenge for us all. Australia encourages a continuation of this important work. It is critical for the successful implementation of the Convention.