



Eighteenth Meeting of the States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention

Geneva, 16-20 November 2020 (virtual meeting)

Australian Intervention on the Sponsorship Program

Thank you Mr President.

Australia is pleased to continue serving as coordinator of the anti-personnel land mine ban convention sponsorship program.

This year has been like no other in recent memory.

While we would have liked to have sponsored delegates to attend the intersessional meetings in June and the 18th Meeting of States Parties this week, this has not been possible due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions on travel and meetings in general.

I for one have missed the in-person interaction with experts from capitals, especially mine affected countries, that we benefited from in Oslo, and at meetings in previous years.

For those interested in the financial status of the program, it began 2020 with around 25,000chf, which was carried over from a very successful 2019.

Thanks to the generous contributions from Norway, Canada, Netherlands, Switzerland, Austria, Turkey and Australia, the program received around 126,000chf this year to take the total available to it to just over 150,000chf.

This means we are well placed to sponsor delegates to the intersessional in June 2021 and the 19th MSP in the Netherlands should be covid-19 pandemic allow it.

This relatively healthy financial position should also not discourage those in a position to do so to contribute to it in 2021 so we can make up for lost time.

I thank you Mr President.