



Geneva, February 2020

Your Excellency

Dear Colleague

We write to you in our respective capacities as President of the Eighteenth Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, and Coordinator of the Convention's Sponsorship Programme.

The Fifth Annual Pledging Conference for the implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention will be held on 25 February in Geneva. Ahead of this, we are reaching out to all States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention to encourage strongly pledged new, renewed or increased support for the Sponsorship Programme.

The objective of the Sponsorship Programme is to ensure significant participation by delegations of States in the Convention's intersessional meetings in Geneva in June 2020, and in the Eighteenth Meeting of the States Parties to take place in Geneva in November 2020. This is an important year for the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, as the Eighteenth Meeting of the States Parties will take stock of the first year of implementation of the new action plan adopted at last year's Review Conference. Ensuring broad participation from mine-affected countries in the work of the Convention is therefore of particular importance.

The Programme supports widespread participation in the work of the Convention, particularly by States Parties with few means and which are in the process of clearing mined areas, destroying stockpiles and assisting victims. The Programme has allowed capital and field-based delegates, selected on the basis of their expertise, to engage in critical dialogue with the Convention's Committees and States Parties. The program in turn enhances the efforts of States Parties to implement their Convention obligations. It has also allowed States not party that have demonstrated interest in taking steps towards accession to the Convention to engage with the work of the Convention.

There are more than 19 least developed and low-income countries implementing core obligations under the Convention, including mine clearance and victim assistance, which would benefit from sponsorship support. We therefore urgently need more States Parties,

which are in a position to do so, to invest in the Sponsorship Programme to ensure widespread participation. Given that the average delegate cost to attend Convention related meetings is reasonably low - between CHF 3,500-4,000 - even relatively small contributions to the Programme by States Parties will have a significant, direct impact.

To provide a clearer picture of the Sponsorship Programme, the following is an outline of the categories of representatives the Sponsorship Programme could support in 2020, by order of priority:

- Delegates of States Parties that will submit requests for extension under Article 5 for consideration by the Eighteenth Meeting of the States Parties;
- Delegates of States Parties that are required to submit updated work plans and additional information on the basis of decisions made on previously granted requests for extension under Article 5;
- Delegates of States Parties that are nearing completion of their Article 5 obligations;
- Delegates of other States Parties that are in the process of implementing Article 5 and would not be in a position to participate in the meeting without sponsorship support;
- Delegates of States Parties that have indicated having a responsibility for a significant number of landmine survivors and would not be in a position to participate in the meeting without sponsorship support; and
- Delegates of States not party making demonstrable progress toward ratification of or accession to the Convention.

The sponsorship program will continue to consider diversity and inclusion in its implementation. This means trying to achieve greater gender balance and taking into account disability considerations when offering sponsorship to attend meetings where feasible.

Allowing mine-affected States Parties a strong voice in the future direction of the Convention's work is critical. We urge your country to consider new, renewed or increased funding to the Sponsorship Programme as part of your voluntary contributions to the work of the Convention in 2020, including as part of the commitments your country may want to make at the forthcoming Annual Pledging Conference.

Yours sincerely,



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to the United Nations in Geneva

President of the Eighteenth Meeting of the
States Parties



H.E. Sally Mansfield

Permanent Representative of Australia
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Sponsorship Programme
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