

Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance

Thank you, Mr President.

Firstly, I would like to thank you for inviting me to join this panel on behalf of the Committee of Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance.

I also appreciate your initiative earlier this year to host a number of bilateral meetings between States Parties and members of the Coordinating Committee, which provided us the opportunity to understand the complex challenges that States are facing.

The Oslo Action Plan noted that while each State Party is responsible for implementing the provisions of the Convention, enhanced cooperation can support the implementation of its obligations as soon as possible.

Indeed, the lack of resources has been highlighted by most States as a factor in delaying implementation. Resources available to States Parties are insufficient to fully implement the time-bound objectives to the extent possible by 2025, which clearly shows the need for more cooperation.

As my colleagues before me have indicated, thanks to the tireless and collaborative efforts of States, we have made progress, but a number of areas remain to be strengthened.

The Oslo Action Plan requests states to commit the resources needed to meet the obligations as soon as possible and explore all possible alternative and innovative sources of funding.

We were grateful for the reporting by States Parties on their national contributions to their implementation efforts and partnerships with States Parties.

Over the last three years, we have received information from an average of 52% States Parties implementing Article 5 or Victim Assistance obligations, up to 22 States, on financial or in-kind resources to their national programmes. Some provide substantial resources to their programmes, and we welcome their reporting.

As we are sure that many other States Parties have also funded their national programs, we would like to encourage them to submit information on their resources employed and the gaps in support.

We also welcome the small number of States that have reported on exploring alternative and innovative sources of funding. While it is critical for us to seek out new and more effective means for demining, we also need to seek synergies with the private sector and opportunities for innovative financing to ensure sufficient funding for implementation.

Concerning reporting by States in a position to provide assistance, we have seen a slight reduction in the number of States reporting on the provision of financial assistance to affected States since last year. While some mine-affected States have indicated that they receive funding from several States, some reported a reduction in the total amount of support. Others reported no financial support received, despite having in place implementation plans of their commitments.

As we all know, international cooperation is a two-way street. Mine-affected States also have a role to play in mobilising funding, including by providing information

on challenges and requirements for assistance. We welcome that States continue to update their situation during MSP and in their Article 7 Reports.

It is also important to make the most of available platforms for dialogue in this regard. Only 2 States requested the Committee for the Individualised Approach in the first two years of the Oslo Action Plan. This year, the Committee has hosted 4 sessions, and welcomes this increase.

At the national level, one issue which we would like to highlight is only 3 States Parties have reported having a regular dialogue with national and international stakeholders in the country. The Committee continues to encourage States Parties to have a dialogue on progress, challenges and support for implementation by establishing an active and comprehensive national mine action platform within the country. We value that active dialogue among stakeholders in the country can positively impact their implementation.

Closely related to these efforts, the Oslo Action Plan underscores the importance of demonstrating high levels of national ownership by integrating mine activities into national development strategies and humanitarian response plans.

Since the Fourth Review Conference, approximately 21 States have reported acting in this regard. Most of them have highlighted the integration of victim assistance into disability and human rights frameworks. Still, only a few states have indicated that they incorporated mine actions into their national development plans. We believe that incorporating mine activities within development plans impacts potential international resource mobilisation and should not underestimate its effect. We would welcome increased reporting on efforts to implement mine action in broader national frameworks.

The Oslo Action Plan also requests coordination efforts by States in a position to provide assistance. Some have indicated that they coordinate their efforts through participation in the Mine Action Support Group. Others have mentioned other funding mechanisms, such as the UNMAS Voluntary Trust Fund, the ICRC Special Appeal, and the GICHD.

However, it may be time to look at the current state and see where support is lacking to ensure that no state or community is left behind.

Finally, we welcome the reporting by States on efforts to explore the opportunities to share best practices and lessons learned through international, regional and bilateral cooperation between affected States Parties or South-to-South.

We are grateful that since the Fourth Review Conference, approximately 9 States have reported doing it through exchange visits, joint trainings and other measures. As you may know, Japan, in its national capacity, is also a big supporter of regional and South-South cooperation. We look forward to more States providing relevant information in this regard.

Excellencies and colleagues,

Cooperation and Assistance have always been a critical pillar of this Convention. Stronger national ownership and greater coordination among States Parties will ensure the sustainability of demining programmes and allow us to build up positive efforts towards the Fifth Review Conference.

Thank you for your attention.