

Activities and Priorities for Implementation for 2023-2024

Submitted by the President of the Twenty-First Meeting of the States Parties (Germany)

I. Activities of the President

1. On 1 December 2022, the President participated in an event in Berlin to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention jointly organised by the German Federal Foreign Office and Handicap International. The President presented on the Convention's current challenges and priorities of the German presidency.
2. The President chaired five meetings of the Coordinating Committee over the course of January 2023 – September 2023, including a full day retreat held on 18 January 2023.
3. The President chaired five meetings of the Committee on Cooperative Compliance and further coordinated the work of the Committee in accordance with the activities and priorities for implementation of the Committee contained in the document submitted by the Committee to the Twenty-First Meeting of the States Parties (21MSP).
4. On 3 February 2023, the President disseminated a communication condemning the use of mines in Ukraine and addressing the matter of allegations of the use of mines by Ukraine as highlighted in a Human Rights Watch report of 31 January 2023.
5. On 3 March 2023, the President sent a letter to all States Parties retaining mines under Article 3 which have not submitted an Article 7 transparency report in more than two years to encourage reporting in line with the Convention and the Oslo Action Plan (OAP).
6. On 9 March 2023, the President and thematic Committees of the Convention hosted a workshop to recall to States Parties the importance of adherence to the deadline (30 April) to submit annual Article 7 Reports and to encourage States Parties to include detailed quantitative and qualitative information on implementation of their Article 5 commitments in line with the Guide to Reporting and the commitments of the OAP.
7. Together with the Coordinating Committee, the President of the Twentieth Meeting of the States Parties (Colombia) and the President-Designate of the Fifth Review Conference (Cambodia), the President coordinated the submission of the resolution on Implementation of the *Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction* to the United Nations General Assembly.
8. On 19-21 June 2023, the President chaired the Intersessional Meetings. In preparations for the Intersessional Meetings, the President promoted coordination among the different Committees of the Convention. The President submitted preliminary observations on the status of implementation of Article 4 and Article 3 to the 19-21 June 2023 Intersessional Meetings.

9. In line with the President's mandate to promote implementation and universalization of the Convention and its norms, including in relevant multilateral and regional fora, as well as at the national level, the President carried out the following efforts:
 - (a) Following the establishment of the Universalization Contact Group (UCG) at the Twentieth Meeting of the States Parties, the President convened four meetings of the UCG over the course of 2023 to exchange information on universalization efforts, coordinate joint demarches in targeted States not party and discuss universalization opportunities more broadly. The UCG has also discussed opportunities to strengthen universalization efforts in the lead up to the Fifth Review Conference to take place in December 2024.
 - (b) The President and his team met and exchanged communications with several representatives of States not party including during bilateral meetings with – Azerbaijan, Armenia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, and the United Arab Emirates. The President continued adding an agenda item on universalization within the Coordinating Committee;
 - (c) On 14 April 2023, the President met with the Secretary General of the Inter-Parliamentarian Union to discuss universalization efforts. Subsequently, on 30 May 2023, the President offered opening remarks during a global webinar with parliamentarians concerning the Convention.
 - (d) The President participated in a conference in Azerbaijan entitled "Mine action – the path to reaching sustainable development goals" which took place in Azerbaijan from 24 to 26 May 2023. The President offered a presentation highlighting the importance of Azerbaijan acceding to the Convention as soon as possible. The President also took the opportunity to meet with government officials from Azerbaijan.
 - (e) At the time of writing the President was preparing for a number of opportunities to carry out universalization outreach and to usher universalization efforts forward including the First Committee in New York and the Global Victim Assistance Conference in Cambodia.
10. In line with the President's mandate to mobilize sufficient resources to fund the operations of the Implementation Support Unit, on 7 March 2023, the President chaired the *Eighth Annual Pledging Conference for the Implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention*.
11. In accordance with the President's mandate to take the lead on matters related to the United Nations assessed contributions received pursuant to Article 14 of the Convention, the President used the opportunity of the Pledging Conference, the Intersessional Meetings and Informal Meetings in preparation for the 21MSP to encourage States Parties to pay their assessed contributions as soon as possible and highlighted the continued importance of the payment of assessed contributions. The President also ensured that the matter of assessed contributions was a permanent agenda item on Coordinating Committee meetings. The President also sent, on 10 July 2023, a communication to each State concerning the status of their contributions.
12. In accordance with the President's mandate to propose a set of new office holders for agreement by the forthcoming Meeting of the States Parties, the President sent a communication on 18 May 2023 to invite States Parties to express interest. As of 25 September 2023, the President was finalizing the proposal to put forward to the States Parties which, considering expressions of interests from States Parties, aims to be balanced regionally as well as between States Parties in the process of implementing key obligations of the Convention, those in a position to provide financial or other assistance, and other States Parties.
13. As mandated by the Twentieth Meeting of the States Parties, the President, on 24 May 2023, sought clarification on Eritrea's implementation efforts in accordance with Article 8.2 of the Convention. On 21 June 2023, Eritrea responded by indicating Eritrea's decision to withdraw from the Convention. Since this time the President has engaged with the depository to ensure that the steps to effectively

withdraw from the Convention are followed.

14. Given that the response to the Request for Clarification was unsatisfactory, with no information provided on implementation efforts, on 22 August 2023, the President submitted the matter through the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the Twenty-First Meeting of the States Parties in accordance with 8.3.
15. The President coordinated preparations for the 21MSP to be held in Geneva, Switzerland, on 20-24 November 2023. An informal meeting took place as part of the 21MSP preparations on 18 September 2023. The President took the opportunity of the informal meeting to mark the 26th anniversary of the adoption of the text of the Convention on 18 September 1997 in Oslo, Norway.

II. Priorities for implementation

16. Prioritization should be given to strengthening the coordinated approach between States Parties and partners to make progress in Universalization ahead of the Fifth Review Conference. This includes collaborating with regional and international organizations in 2023 to make a coordinating push for universalization. In this regard, the work of the UCG will be increasingly important, in particular to continue coordinating universalization activist and to ensure continuity and follow-up with our efforts.
17. Efforts should be made to ensure that the norm of the Convention remains strong, including by welcoming new States Parties and jointly condemning the use of mine by any actor.
18. Concerning States Parties with Article 4 obligations, priority needs to be given to ensure that the hurdles in coordination and cooperation can be overcome by States with Article 4 missed deadlines and clear timeline for completion be presented and implemented to ensure the destruction of remaining stockpiled mines as soon as possible.
19. Concerning Article 3, several States Parties retaining mines have not submitted their Article 7 reports in one or more years or have reported retaining the same amount of mines year after year. Priority should be given to ensuring the submission of Article 7 reports with updated information on the status of retained mines and ensure that states annually review their retained mines and ensure that they do not exceed the minimum number absolutely necessary for permitted purposes. Priority should also be given to continuing efforts, including those of past presidencies, to raise awareness of alternatives to the use of live anti-personnel mines for training and research purposes.
20. States Parties should give particular attention to ensuring the reporting rates are improved including by the use of the simplified reporting form which was developed to facilitate reporting by States with no obligations under the Convention.
21. To ensure the successful deliberations of the Convention, priority needs to be given to ensuring the payment of assessed contributions in a timely manner to ensure UN support to the Meetings of the States Parties in accordance with Article 14.
22. Finally, the Implementation Support Unit is an integral part of the Convention's machinery and it is important to facilitate their work. In this regard, priority should be given to ensuring that as many States Parties as possible contribute to its operation.