

## **Sponsorship Programme Coordinator**

Thank you President.

Australia is pleased to be serving as Sponsorship Program Coordinator for the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention in 2023. The Sponsorship Program is a critical tool in ensuring broad, inclusive participation in the work of the Convention and we are glad to have had this reflected in the last three days of our deliberations.

As we enter the last year of implementation of the Oslo Action Plan and we begin our conversation on a new action plan to be adopted by States Parties at the Review Conference, the Sponsorship Program is more important than ever. The Sponsorship Programme can assist these efforts by ensuring that States with limited resourcing, particularly those with active mine clearance and destruction obligations, can attend convention meetings and take part in our conversations.

In addition to this, support through the Sponsorship Program will also allow for participation by States not yet party that have demonstrated an interest in the work of the Convention to outline the steps they are taking towards accession. The upcoming Review Conference presents an important opportunity for States not party to consider joining the Convention and joining the high level Review Conference as States Parties.

I would like to acknowledge the generous contributions of donors to the fund in 2022 Austria, Canada, France, Germany, Netherlands, Slovenia and Switzerland. Australia was also a proud donor to the fund last year.

The Sponsorship Programme began the year with a total of approximately 66'000 Swiss Francs. In 2023, we also welcome the contributions from Canada, Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland. Australia will also be providing a contribution to the programme in this year. Contributions in 2023 total approximately 89'000 Swiss Francs.

We are very pleased that we were able to execute a sponsorship programme for these Intersessional Meetings. To these meetings we were able to provide support to 31 delegates from 21 countries. We expect the cost of the Sponsorship Programme for the Intersessional Meetings to total approximately 67'000 Swiss Francs.

The balance going towards the Twenty-First Meeting of the States Parties will total 95,000 Francs.

Thanks to donors, we are well placed to sponsor eligible delegates to the Meeting of the States Parties in 2023.

However, if we are aiming to have a successful sponsorship programme, we would need significant additional funding and we are hopeful to receive this in the lead up to the Fifth Review Conference in 2024.

I appeal to all States Parties in this regard. And given that the average delegate cost to attend these meetings is reasonably low, even relatively small contributions to the Program will have a significant impact.

Thank you.