



ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION
STATEMENT OF SPONSORSHIP COORDINATOR (AUSTRALIA)
Tenth Annual Pledging Conference, 12 March 2025

Thank you Madam President, it is a pleasure to join you here today. Australia is pleased to serve as Sponsorship Programme Coordinator.

This is an important year for the Convention to turn our commitments at Siem Reap into action. We are grateful to be working under your leadership and guidance.

As all of us here today appreciate, the Sponsorship Programme is essential to the work of the Convention. It enables participation in the meetings of the Convention by experts from States Parties with limited means.

Such participation not only allows national experts to share progress in implementation of their obligations under the Convention but also allows them to share their challenges and to hold a continuous dialogue with other States and officeholders of the Convention. This continuous conversation between all of us is crucial to ensure effective implementation.

In addition to this, the Sponsorship Programme, whenever possible and relevant, has also supported participation by States not party that have demonstrated an interest in the work of the Convention.

At a time of challenge to the norms of the Convention, this support for universalisation efforts has taken on particular significance.

For example, we were pleased the Sponsorship Programme was able to support the participation of a representative from Tonga to join us at our Review Conference in Siem Reap and update the Convention on that country's steps towards accession to the Convention.

Madam President

The participation of mine-affected States is critical. Allowing mine-affected States Parties to have a say in our work is essential to good functioning of our Convention.

Given the importance of our Convention, we therefore call for States Parties in a position to do so to invest in the Sponsorship Programme for 2025 to ensure broad participation.

Given that the average delegate cost to attend the Convention's meetings is reasonably low – between CHF 3,000-4,000 per participant– even relatively small contributions to the Programme by States Parties will have a significant and direct impact. Of course, all contributions are welcome, both big and small.

Madam President,

As we reported at the Fifth Review Conference in Siem Reap last November, thanks to contributions from the States Parties Austria, Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland and Türkiye, as well as from my own State, the Sponsorship Programme supported a total of 85 delegates to attend meetings of the Convention in 2024.

35 delegates were sponsored to attend the intersessional meetings and 50 delegates were sponsored to attend the Review Conference. The total cost of the Programme in 2024 was approximately 205,000 CHF, comprised of approximately 70,000 CHF for the intersessional meetings and 135'000 CHF for the Review Conference.

Madam President,

At present the Sponsorship Programme will start this year with approximately 156'000 CHF. At this level, the Programme will only have capacity to support approximately 44 delegates to attend the June Intersessional Meetings and the 22nd Meeting of States Parties and its preparatory meetings.

However, there are more than 20 least developed and low-income countries implementing core obligations, including mine clearance and victim assistance, under the Convention which would benefit from sponsorship support to engage in the work of the Convention in 2025.

It is my duty today to appeal to all States Parties to consider a new, renewed or increased contribution to the Sponsorship Programme, and to provide this

contribution as early as possible and to consider multi-annual funding to make this Programme sustainable as we work to implement the Siem Reap Action Plan.

Today, during these challenging international circumstances, we must use demonstrate our collective support for the Convention, including through guaranteeing an inclusive process in our efforts.

We thank those that have already this year pledged support to the Sponsorship Programme, including [Canada, Germany, Japan, Switzerland, ...]. My own country, Australia, is also pleased to have made a multi-year commitment to the sponsorship program. We look forward to more States joining us to pledge support for the Sponsorship Programme.

[Since its establishment, the following States contributed to the sponsorship programme: Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Türkiye, and the United Kingdom; along with the European Commission and my own country Australia].

For further information on the Sponsorship Programme, we would ask that you please contact myself, one of my team, or the ISU.

I thank you Madam President.