

## ANNEX IV

### INTERSESSIONAL WORK

#### Background

Over the past three years a number of meetings on various aspects of Mine Action have been organized. They have provided important discussions on how to improve international coordination. However, there has been a certain lack of systematic structuring and sequencing of agendas and conferences. A more comprehensive framework would facilitate further progress.

Since its entry into force, the Convention may provide a more coherent and focused framework for international cooperation also with regard to Mine Action activities. It will be important to ensure the systematic, effective implementation of the Convention through a more regularized programme of work by establishing informal, open-ended intersessional working groups which could engage a broad international community for the purpose of advancing the achievement of the humanitarian objectives of the Convention. Such groups could facilitate in-depth considerations of Mine Action issues by all interested parties at meetings which complement and build upon each other in a structured and systematic way.

#### Proposal

To consolidate and concentrate global Mine Action efforts to the greatest extent possible and to highlight the role of the Convention as a comprehensive framework for Mine Action, it is proposed that the First Meeting of the States Parties in Maputo consider the establishment of an intersessional work programme. The aim is to organize the work within the framework of the Convention in a way which promotes continuity, openness, transparency, inclusiveness and a cooperative spirit.

In this regard, using the Maputo Declaration, the States Parties could establish informal, open-ended **Standing Committees of Experts (SCEs)** to focus on key themes as:

- Mine clearance
- Victim assistance, socio-economic reintegration and mine awareness
- Stockpile destruction
- Technologies for mine action
- General status and operation of the Convention

## **Mandate of the SCEs**

- ▶ In-depth consideration of relevant questions for improving Mine Action within the above categories and outlining specific activities.
- ▶ Facilitating and supporting the effective functioning of the Convention as an instrument of Mine Action by maintaining practical work at a high level and with particular emphasis on international cooperation among governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The role of the Intersessional Work Programme undertaken by the SCEs should be an essential element in maintaining the momentum and cohesion behind the global humanitarian Mine Action effort. The work of the SCEs should support, *inter alia*, the coordination role played by the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) as the focal point for United Nations Mine Action, and encourage the active participation of the United Nations and regional organizations active in Mine Action.

## **Participation**

The work of the SCEs should build on the approach and spirit of inclusivity and engagement present in the informal Ottawa process, the Oslo negotiations and the First Meeting of the States Parties in Maputo. SCEs should provide an informal setting in which experts representing all interested Mine Action actors, e.g. States Parties to the Convention, Signatory States, other interested States, international and regional organizations and NGOs, might have an opportunity for substantive discussion and work to ensure that the global community continues to improve and make more efficient its collective Mine Action efforts in support of the objectives of the Convention.

## **Organizational Modalities for Intersessional Work**

The SCEs should be co-chaired by a mine-affected and another interested State Party. The Co-chairs should be assisted in carrying out their tasks by two Rapporteurs, also reflecting this same balanced approach: one from a mine-affected and the other from another interested State Party. The Rapporteurs will assume the role of Co-chairs for the coming year and will be succeeded by new Rapporteurs. The co-chairmanships would last from one Meeting of the States Parties to the next. The SCEs could meet on, at least, an annual basis.

Whilst the Co-chairs of the SCEs may wish to host such intersessional work in their capitals (or elsewhere), it is suggested that meetings of the SCEs normally take place in Geneva. It would therefore be useful to consider the role of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) in offering practical support to such intersessional activities, for example, by providing the necessary organization and venue. The meetings of the SCEs would, in this way, imply no additional costs beyond the costs of attendance.