

## ANNEX III

### CIRCULATION OF ARTICLE 7 REPORTS

Under Article 7, paragraph 1, of the Convention each State Party shall report to the Secretary-General of the United Nations on items (a) to (i). To facilitate this undertaking and to promote comparability and evaluation of data, a standard format has been developed in consultation with States Parties and will be considered for adoption by the First Meeting of the States Parties.

Given the detailed character of the reporting obligations, and the requirement under Article 7 for the Secretary-General of the United Nations to circulate this information, consideration should be given to the practical modalities and implications of meeting this requirement and an efficient and cost-effective approach to meeting this requirement should be established.

In accordance with Article 14, paragraph 2, of the Convention the costs incurred by the Secretary-General of the United Nations under Article 7 shall be borne by the States Parties. The amount of those costs depends largely on two factors:

- circulation of printed documents
- translation into all six authentic languages

#### **Is there a need for printed documents?**

With a new treaty instrument and new reporting requirements, we have an opportunity to take a new approach to the issue of document circulation. That means we could take advantage of today's prevalence of paperless communication and reflect this in the way the Article 7 reports are circulated.

States Parties would mail or submit their reports to the United Nations Secretariat through normal channels. The provision of reporting information on a disk would allow the Secretariat to set up the required compilation of reports in their internal database with a minimum of effort - and costs for the States Parties. For that reason the provision of reporting information on a disk should be encouraged.

For that reason and in order to assist States Parties in using the formats, Austria as Friend of the Chair would plan to distribute to delegations the agreed format, in template form, on disk, subsequent to its adoption by States Parties.

However, the United Nations Secretariat would continue to be prepared to receive also 'hard copy' reports in cases where States Parties will not be in a position to use electronic communication means, or when information would be submitted which is not easily convertible, e.g. maps.

Under Article 7, paragraph 3, of the Convention the Secretary-General of the United Nations shall transmit all such reports to the States Parties. Given the anticipated quantity of information to be submitted, it would be practical and cost-effective to enable States Parties to retrieve the required information electronically – directly from the database in the United Nations Secretariat. Of course, those countries that might require or prefer a paper version could request the United Nations Secretariat for a 'hard copy' printout of this information.

### **Should only States Parties have access to information provided under Article 7?**

The information contained in the reports will be of direct relevance for mine action. For this reason, it would indeed make sense to make it available to all interested in mine action - governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Easy access to Article 7 reports would improve the information flow and hence the coordination and effectiveness of global mine-clearance. Indeed, it would run counter to the humanitarian purpose of the Convention to prevent non-States and NGOs from having access to what will be current and accurate information which could be used for mine action purposes.

Some countries that are not yet States Parties have indicated that they would be willing to report under Article 7 on a voluntary basis. Should those countries be excluded from retrieving the reports of other States?

It should be recalled that the reports for the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms are on the web-site of the United Nations, freely accessible for everyone using the internet. The weapons systems covered under the Register of Conventional Arms are generally accepted to be of continued military significance and thus the information could be considered to be of a more sensitive nature than the contents of the Article 7 reports that deal with a weapon the destruction of which is at the core of the treaty obligations. Further, as States Parties will have already given up the option of using anti-personnel mines, questions of national security and confidentiality of information for these purposes become largely irrelevant.

### **Has every report to be translated into all six authentic languages?**

States Parties will provide their reports in the language of their choice among the authentic languages of the Convention. These reports will be entered into the United Nations database in this form.

Attached to the principle of multilingualism, States Parties will aim at making these reports also available in other authentic languages of the Convention.

In view of the fact that the Convention does not provide for the costs of such translations, States Parties will adopt a pragmatic, case-by-case approach, calling on interested States Parties to provide such translations which then could be transmitted by the reporting State Party to the United Nations Secretariat for inclusion in the United Nations database.

This mechanism will be assessed at the next Meeting of the States Parties.