

**UPDATE FROM ISU APMBC – MR JUAN CARLOS RUAN**

**MASG MEETING, 24 OCTOBER 2023 – NEW YORK**

- This year the Convention is at an important crossroad. The current German President will hand the Convention's Presidency over to Cambodia at the end of the year.
- Cambodia will preside over the Convention in 2024 which is a Review Conference year and will host the Fifth Review Conference in Siem Reap, Cambodia in December 2024.
- For those not familiar with Review Conferences, these are high level meetings and present an opportunity in the lead up to the Conference to
  - Focus the world's attention on the humanitarian essence of the Convention and promote the international norm.
  - Renewal of (Political/resource) commitments by donor and mine affected States Parties.
  - The establishment of a concrete action plan to ensure fulfilment of the Convention's aims between 2025-2029 (Siem Reap action plan)
  - Promoting accession or strengthening of the norm amongst States not yet party to the Convention
- Universalization of the Convention is an important goal and requires support from MASG members
- One of the matters which will be front and center on the agenda will be that of Cooperation and Assistance and how to translate the nice words on paper to action.
- At the Fourth Review Conference in Oslo in 2019 the States Parties committed to redoubling their efforts to ensure that resources are provided to mine affected States Parties for their implementation efforts.
- The States Parties also recommitted to implementation, to the furthest, extent possible by 2025.
- However, it will need to be determined if the Convention community has responded to the pledge that was made in 2019.

- We have a number of States Parties that are diligently implementing their obligations and could finalize implementation in the next years and require sustained support including Angola, Cambodia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, and Zimbabwe among others. In many cases, States have indicated that their implementation goals have been negatively affected by a lack of resources and changing resource patterns.
- Yet there are also a number of countries that are simply not on the radar of States in a position to provide assistance and are receiving little to no funding for their implementation efforts, some of these States have been invited to present to the MASG in the past, for example Ecuador, Mauritania and Peru.
- Next Year, in the lead to the Review Conference, the Cambodian Presidency will launch a consultative process to support the development of the next action plan. As with the Nairobi, Cartagena, Maputo and Oslo Action Plans, cooperation and assistance will be an important part of the Action Plan.
- In this regard, it would be important to engage in the discussion of how to ensure that cooperation and assistance take into account the goals and objectives of States Parties to reach the Convention targets for implementation.
- While there are humanitarian emergencies, it is important that States in a position to provide assistance, strengthen the Convention by ensuring that the Cooperation and assistance mechanisms. This has always been the a strong point of the Convention.
- So the question is how to strengthen partnerships between State in a position to provide assistance and mine affected States Parties, and in particular those that fall off the radar.
- On the margins of the 21MSP two States Parties will take the opportunity to hold Individualised Approach meetings to engage with partners – Somalia and Tajikistan. We hope that all MASG members will participate in these meetings. For those not familiar with individualized approach meetings, they are in short, 2 hr meetings in which these State will invite relevant stakeholders to share with them their challenges and gaps in implementation.
- Finally, last week Cambodia held a global conference on Victim Assistance and it was clear that there is a need to look at how we can provide additional funding for Victim Assistance and support to organization of persons with disabilities in order for them to continue providing a bridge between the government and some of the most vulnerable which are often survivors and other persons with disabilities in rural areas.

While mine action funding is not the only avenue for victim assistance, in certain contexts it is the only funding available and can act as a catalyst for collaboration with human rights and development organizations.