

CONSIDERATION OF THE ORGANISATION OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE STATES PARTIES

Submitted by the President on behalf of the Coordinating Committee

27 April 2012

**(For discussion at the 25 May 2012 meeting of the
Standing Committee on the General Status and Operation of the Convention)**

1. The 11MSP, having noted suggestions to consider whether the interactive character of the annual Meeting of the States Parties could not be enhanced and its duration shortened while improving its overall effectiveness, decided that the Coordinating Committee brainstorm on this theme in the first half of 2012 and that the May 2012 intersessional meetings discuss it and submit, through the President, recommendations to the 12MSP in this regard. The 11MSP also agreed that should any action be taken by the 12MSP on this basis, it would lead to appropriate adjustments to the organisation of the MSP effective as from the Thirteenth Meeting.
2. On the basis of the above-mentioned 11MSP decisions, the Coordinating Committee at its meetings in the first half of 2012 gave consideration to the organisation of the annual Meetings of the States Parties. The main conclusion drawn by the Coordinating Committee was that there is general satisfaction with how Meetings of the States Parties are currently organised. It was agreed that while some improvements could be made, revolutionary change was not required. Indeed, in many respects, this Convention's Meetings of the States Parties are the model that could be replicated, for example, with respect to the integration of the participation of civil society organisations.
3. In addition to concluding that there is general satisfaction with the way that Meetings of the States Parties are currently organised, the Coordinating Committee noted the following:
 - a. Time allocated for individual States Parties to report on progress and challenges encountered in implementation is probably the most important part of the Meetings of the States Parties and logically requires a great deal of meeting time.
 - b. While minimising the amount of use of time for general statements could be feasible, eliminating an agenda item for a general exchange of views would not be desirable. The General exchange of views constitutes a political and diplomatic segment of the MSP that is important to maintain. A general exchange of views is particularly important for States Parties which participate at a relatively high level and States not parties which may wish to engage in the work of the Convention. To overcome the constraint of limited time available for the MSP, the President could invite delegations to respect their speaking time and to limit general statements to three minutes.
 - c. When Meetings of the States Parties take place in a mine-affected country, delegates benefit from the opportunity to see the real-life impact of mines and efforts to address these problems.
 - d. The Coordinating Committee recalled that different conventional weapons instruments deal with overlapping content. It was recalled that at the 10MSP, the States Parties accepted the recommendations that: (i) The States Parties, and in particular States Parties that are party to more than one related instrument, should pursue coherence in the scheduling of meetings of relevant instruments, particularly those meetings that

deal with the clearance of explosive hazards and assistance to the victims of conventional weapons, and, (ii) The States Parties should regularly evaluate the potential for synergy in the work of various related instruments, while acknowledging the distinct legal obligations of each. The consideration of the issue of overlaps between the different conventional weapons instruments remains sensible, and further discussions are needed to explore the appropriate framework to deal with it given the principles of independence and non-interference between international instruments.

- e. There may be value in examining how to avoid overlap between MSPs and meetings of the Standing Committees.
4. The Coordinating Committee, while seeing no need to recommend changes regarding how Meetings of the States Parties are organised, noted the importance of periodically assessing how the Convention's formal and informal meetings are supporting the implementation process to the greatest extent possible.