10MSP Summary - Enhancing International Cooperation and Assistance (30 November)

The session on international cooperation and assistance started with the presentation of three documents prepared to guide the discussion:

- a list of questions generated by the special session held at the intersessional Standing Committee meetings in June 2010, on the themes of: expressing needs, matching needs with resources and efficiently using resources;
- a paper prepared by Susan Eckey, President of the Second Review Conference, "Strengthening International Cooperation and Assistance in support of mine action and implementation of the Convention";
- a paper prepared by Zambia proposing the creation of, and setting out the rationale for, a new Standing Committee on Resources, Cooperation and Assistance.

Statements were delivered by 32 states and 5 organizations, the largest number of delegations to have taken the floor in any discussion in the history of Mine Ban Treaty meetings. All were supportive of Zambia's proposal and many expressed thanks to Amb. Eckey and Norway for showing leadership on this topic.

Zambia proposed that the new Standing Committee's Terms of Reference be established at the Standing Committee meetings in June 2011 and that the election of its leadership be carried out at the 11th Meeting of States Parties. Canada and Norway agreed that their respective Contact Groups (Linking Mine Action and Development and Resource Utilization) be subsumed into the new Standing Committee.

Many stated that cooperation and support is a major issue facing States Parties. Most proposed that the new Standing Committee would not be a venue for the presentation of requests for resources, but rather that it would be an opportunity to share resource mobilization ideas, experience and best practice, and to discuss the efficient and effective use of resources. Many stated that it could be a venue for sharing information and knowledge on measuring impact, outcomes and effectiveness of mine action undertaken.

Most states and organizations emphasized that the new Standing Committee would also provide an important opportunity to share technical knowledge, lessons learned and to devise and share creative ways in which states could assist each other with "South to South" partnerships and cooperation. Several states, including Colombia, Ecuador, Jordan, Peru and Uganda, gave examples of fruitful cooperative partnerships of this kind.

Several states expressed satisfaction that the theme of cooperation and assistance would be moved from more informal venues into the plenary, allowing smaller states the opportunity to participate fully in discussions on this theme.

Many states and organizations emphasized the importance of national ownership in ensuring the sustainability and effectiveness of mine action programs, including Argentina, Germany, Indonesia, Japan, Norway, Slovenia, the ICRC and the IFRC. The ICRC called for national capacity building to be undertaken where appropriate but suggested that in some contexts rapid clearance should be prioritized over national capacity building. Thailand offered a possible counterpoint by proposing the "potential helper model," whereby a state with a relatively mild problem would benefit from capacity building assistance and then assist more seriously affected states.

The ICBL and Norway called for scrutiny and discussion of the ratio of funding for coordination structures and mechanisms relative to funding for clearance, highlighted the need to match coordination structures to the actual
needs for implementation on the ground, and advocated for building up existing national institutions rather than creating specialized coordinating bodies, where appropriate.

A major theme of the session was the need to look for synergies with related instruments of international humanitarian law. Canada proposed that states not party to the Mine Ban Treaty but part of other treaties like the CCW, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, or the Convention on Cluster Munitions) be invited to participate in the new Standing Committee. The idea was largely met with support, including from Argentina, Germany, Ireland, New Zealand, Philippines, Slovenia, the ICRC and UNMAT.

A number of states continued to push for the integration of mine action into development budgets and saw the new Standing Committee as an opportunity for further exploration of this approach. The ICBL called for more discussion about the pros and cons to this approach, asking to hear about the experience of donors and affected countries that have worked with contributions made through development budgets, as well as from states with dedicated budgets.

**Australia, Canada, Chad, Ireland, Japan** and **Slovenia** suggested that the new Standing Committee invite the participation of representatives of international financial institutions, development banks and private donors in order for States Parties to become aware of and make use of new or underused avenues for resource mobilization. In particular, Canada, drawing on knowledge gained by the Contact Group on Linking Mine Action and Development, noted that many states could take better advantage of funds via development budgets and institutions.

The **ICBL** called for a frank discussion on what gains can still be made from more R&D in the mine action sector. **Norway** and the ICBL expressed the opinion that implementation needs in the field should guide decisions on whether to undertake further research and development. The **GICHD** advocated for continued research, in particular on gender and mine action, and invited guidance from States Parties.