

Cartagena Summit on a Mine-Free World
Item 9(b) Cooperation and Assistance
Statement by Australia

Australia remains committed to fulfilling its cooperation and assistance obligations under the Mine Ban Convention and contributing to the global effort towards a mine-free world.

Over the past five years, our assistance has been guided by the *AusAID Mine Action Strategy 2005-10*, supported by a \$75 million pledge to clear landmines, assist survivors and educate communities about landmines and explosive remnants of war.

The Australian Government was proud to achieve the \$75 million commitment to mine action in August 2009, well ahead of schedule.

Since 1997, Australia has assisted 16 mine-affected countries, mainly in the Asia-Pacific region but also in the Middle East and parts of Africa.

In line with our commitment to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action, Australia's mine action program has been delivered in response to partner government priorities and to help these countries achieve their obligations under different international conventions.

Through our assistance, Australia has also supported organisations that promote adherence to the Mine Ban Convention by non-state parties and non-state actors.

As outlined in the Cartagena Action Plan, fulfilling the obligations under the Mine Ban Convention will require sustained political, financial and material commitment.

To build on our successes and strengthen our firm commitment to this agenda, Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Stephen Smith announced a new *Mine Action Strategy for the Australian aid program 2010-14* on 18 November 2009.

The new strategy will guide the provision of assistance by Australia to countries affected by landmines, cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war, thus demonstrating our commitment to Action 37 of the Cartagena Action Plan.

Under the Strategy, Australia will spend \$100 million over the next five years. This is the largest ever five-year pledge made by Australia to mine action.

As a multi-year commitment, this will support the achievement of Action 38 of the Cartagena Action Plan. This approach will facilitate long-term planning of mine action programs and improve the sustainability of outcomes in countries where we work.

The Strategy has one overriding goal – to reduce the threat and social and economic impact of landmines, cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war.

To achieve this, Australia will work towards the following four outcomes – improved quality of life for victims, reduced deaths and injuries, enhanced capacity of countries

to manage their mine action programs, and effective leadership and advocacy by Australia on mine action. Our focus on building national ownership and capacity in affected countries will support global efforts under Action 39 of the Cartagena Action Plan.

Under the strategy, Australia will also integrate mine action within our development programs and activities, thus supporting poverty reduction, sustainable development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. This will contribute towards Action 49 of the Cartagena Action Plan.

Australia will measure and monitor our progress against the strategy over the next five years a performance and evaluation framework. We intend to involve people with disability and victims in the development, implementation and evaluation of our mine action programming.

Looking ahead, Australia will work collaboratively with a range of partners in implementing the Cartagena Action Plan and our new *Mine Action Strategy*.

We take this opportunity to thank our partners – other governments, Australian and international organisations, the United Nations, other donors and civil society – and look forward to cooperation with you over the next five years.