

CARTAGENA SUMMIT ON A MINE FREE WORLD

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR PAUL VAN DEN IJSSEL,
HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF THE NETHERLANDS

UNDER AGENDA ITEM 9 f: Other matters important for achieving the Convention's aims

Madam President,

I would like to share some thoughts with you and other delegations of a more general nature, regarding the way the Convention and various entities related to it have been functioning in the past and how they might function in the future.

The Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention is unique in many ways. I would like to highlight a few aspects that we consider essential for the full and proper implementation of the Treaty.

The first aspect I want to mention is the unique role of civil society. A large number and wide variety of organisations, united in the ICBL, were instrumental in starting the Ottawa-process and bringing it to a successful end. But their involvement has not stopped there. Civil society continues to serve as our collective memory and our conscience. The message may not always be what we, as States Parties, want to hear –and we need not always agree to it- but it is certainly appreciated and considered by my delegation as an indispensable part of the Convention.

Secondly, I would like to highlight the contribution of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining. In the course of its existence, the G.I.C.H.D. has developed into a true Centre of Excellence regarding mine action. Its role in supporting mine affected States, for example through developing and implementing the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA), and through the development and continuous updating of the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) is pivotal.

When mentioning the G.I.C.H.D. one also has to acknowledge the hospitality it provides to the Implementation Support Unit. In the course of the years, the Centre has shown to be a generous host and as States Parties, we have all been able to profit from that hospitality.

And this, Madam President, brings me to the Implementation Support Unit itself. I think everyone in this room will agree, when I state that the ISU has been a crucial member of the "Ottawa family". Without the tireless efforts of Kerry Brinkert and his team, we would not be where we are today. Their dedication has been exemplary.

The fact that the "ISU-model" has served as an example for other international instruments is an indication of its success.

We hope that the upcoming evaluation will help to improve the work of the ISU even more.

Madam President,

Unfortunately, good performance and heaps of praise do not guarantee sufficient funding for the continued operation of the ISU. We have taken good note of the calls for additional

funding. It is therefore with great pleasure that I am able to announce that the Government of The Netherlands has decided on a new contribution to the operational costs of the ISU for the year 2010, to the amount of One hundred thousand Euros, equivalent to approximately 150.000 Swiss francs or US dollars.

I sincerely hope that this will inspire other States Parties to do the same.

Thank you