

Transparency Measures
Statement by Belgium
Coordinator

Madam President,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Transparency is a key word in the implementation of this Convention that was built in the spirit of solidarity and cooperation.

It allows us to build confidence, it gives us a tool to fully implement the Convention and it is an opportunity for States Parties to express their needs and for others to offer assistance.

In its capacity of coordinator for Reporting, Belgium made a proposal on the way ahead for a better exchange of information, distributed under the reference CCM/MSP/2013/WP.4. I will come back later on to this paper which develops (proposes) clear objectives and concrete actions both on quantitative as qualitative level.

However, we should not forget that Reporting is in the first place an obligation foreseen in Art 7 and 3.8 of the Convention. Let me remind you that all States Parties must submit an initial report as soon as possible but not later than 180 days after the entry into force of the Convention for that State party. States Parties must also submit an annual update for the 30th of April covering the previous calendar year.

The figures show that the present reminder is more than necessary.

Let me present these figures to you.

As of the 3rd of September, 59 States parties have submitted their initial report. 17 are still due, among which some for more than one and even two years. This gives us a compliance rate of 71 %. For 7 States Parties the deadline is not yet reached. We encourage those States parties to submit their initial report before the deadline and we urge all others to submit it without any delay.

52 States Parties were required to give an annual update for 2012. 36 of them did so, giving a compliance rate of about 70 %.

While the absolute figures could make us optimistic, the tendency, however, is less cheerful. Indeed, since the entry into force of the Convention, the reporting rate has been decreasing year after year. The experience in other Conventions has shown that if we do not tackle this problem as soon as possible, it will become very difficult to stop this tendency. Actions are to be taken urgently.

We observed that a big number of smaller States parties without any implementation obligations didn't submit their annual report. For those States there is a simple way to comply

with their Article 7 obligations by submitting the one sheet cover page of the reporting form.

Finally, since the entry into force of the Convention, three States, Canada, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Palau submitted a voluntary report. We thank them for that and we encourage all signatories and non-state parties to do so in the spirit of transparency.

So far the facts and figures.

Madame President,

As mentioned earlier, Belgium is proposing (proposed) a working paper for the way ahead for a better exchange of information containing clear objectives and concrete actions on the quantitative and qualitative level. The natural deadline for the evaluation of the proposed objectives will be the first Review Conference.

Allow me to shortly present this paper.

At the quantitative level a special focus should be put on the initial reports. The initial reports are the benchmark against which the progress of the implementation of the Convention is measured and they are, therefore, crucial for our work.

This focus should not jeopardize the overall efforts for a full implementation of the Article 7 obligations and in (more) particular the efforts to encourage affected States to submit their annual update.

To do so, we will, together with all stakeholders, continue our efforts in sending reminder letters, in approaching States Parties bilaterally and in offering assistance for the elaboration (submission) of the reports.

To better coordinate all this efforts, we will consult on the opportunity to create an informal Contact Group open for all interested stakeholders. This group could meet at the different meetings of the Convention to analyze the challenges and to propose actions and it would report to the States Parties in plenary.

Having a high reporting rate without precise and accurate information is of less use. States should be encouraged to take full advantage of the tools which are at their disposal for the submission of high quality reports. In order to assist States parties in completing the proposed reporting form in an efficient way, we presented at the 3 MSP a draft reporting guide. This draft guide can be found on the Convention's website, and can be used already. My intention was to present at this meeting a consolidated version of this guide. Unfortunately, this deadline could not be met as I did not get in time all the information I asked and needed to complete the consolidated version. But things are moving and in the near future, the sections on Victim Assistance and Clearance will be updated and completed. No need to say that all contributions are welcome.

During the last intersessional meetings, we promoted the importance of reporting in the different thematic technical workshops. This experience was encouraging but has to be

fine-tuned. That's why we will limit these presentations to one thematic issue and will go more into detail at the 2014 intersessional meeting. Together with the other coordinators we will identify which thematic issue could benefit the most of this approach.

Madame President,

Reporting is important for the implementation of the Convention and the challenges we are facing are important. It is our hope that the working paper with the way ahead for a better exchange of information will contribute to a better compliance to the Article 7 obligations and will lead to an efficient reporting.

Let me conclude by urging all States Parties that are late with the submission of their initial report to do so without delay. For the States Parties that didn't submit their annual update : it is not late.

Let us show that this Convention cares about transparency.

Thank you, Madame President.