

International Cooperation and Assistance

Statement of Australia

Thank you Madam President

Australia thanks Austria and Iraq for their efforts as coordinators on cooperation and assistance, and in particular for their contribution towards the development of guidance on an integrated approach to victim assistance.

Australia takes seriously its responsibilities to provide assistance to affected countries and support victims. Australia provides this support through a multi-pronged approach, designed to extend the range and breadth of our support. We are also mindful that there needs to be a balance between clearance work and victim assistance.

Australia provides support bilaterally to individual countries directly or through organisations like United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS). We fund organisations such as the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) and Handicap International which are providing assistance to victims in a multitude of countries. And finally we provide support to organisations such as the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) whose work improves the efficiency of mine action.

Australia has a significant long term commitment to demining activities in Cambodia. Australia has committed AUD9 million to the Clearing for Results Phase III, which will build on the success of the previous phases of this program. The project commenced in 2015 and will run until 2020. The program is implemented through the Cambodian Mine Action and Victims Assistance Authority (CMAA), which is the peak body with

responsibility for monitoring and coordinating mine action activities in Cambodia.

This year Australia has contribution AUD5 million to UNMAS to fund its humanitarian and stabilisation activities in Iraq.

Australia has also provided nearly AUD500,000 to support the broad range of activities UNMAS undertakes, including technical assistance to governments, responding to humanitarian emergencies and mine action activities in Afghanistan and Colombia.

As previously mentioned during this meeting, Australia has committed AUD1.9 million over three years to the ICRC's Special Fund for the Disabled and this year has contributed AUD500,000 to the ICRC's 2016 Special Appeal for Disability and Mine Action. These contributions will be used to support ICRC's victim assistance work in many affected countries.

Australia values its long term partnership with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD). The work that GICHD does to improve the capacity of affected countries and the efficiency of mine action makes a valuable contribution to our work. We are currently negotiating a new three-year agreement with GICHD.

Australia has nominated itself to become co-coordinator on international cooperation and assistance, and if it pleases states parties, we would be honoured to take forward the good work already done in this area. It would also allow us to be involved in the finalisation of the guidance on an integrated approach to victim assistance.

Thank you Madam President