



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CCM COORDINATION COMMITTEE
held on Friday, 31 January 2025
at the Permanent Mission of the Philippines
from 13:30 to 15:15 hours

1. Present:

Philippines – 13MSP President

H.E. Mr. Carlos D. Sorreta
Ms. Christian Hope Reyes
Ms. Hannah Abubakar

Mexico – Immediate Past President (12MSP)

Ms. Alonso Martínez

Australia

Mr. Gordon Burns

Austria

Ms. Julia Eberl

France

Mr. Mathieu Tasse

Germany

Ms. Bastian Volz

Iraq

Ms. Raghad Hasan

Italy

Ms. Elena Gai

Lao PDR

Mr. Bounnalith Southichak
Ms. Oudavanh Narkkhavong

Netherlands

Ms. Henriëtte van Gulik

Norway

Mr. Fredrik Laache

Switzerland

Ms. Silvia Greve

CMC

Ms. Kasia Derlicka-Rosenbauer

ICRC

Ms. Maya Brehm

UNODA

Ms. Alice Marzi

ISU

Ms. Pamela Moraga
Mr. Emad Al-Juhaishi
Ms. Elaine Weiss
Mr. Jared Bloch

Apologies received:

Panama
Zambia

Absent:

Peru

2. Opening remarks and adoption of the agenda

Ambassador Carlos D. Sorreta, President of the 13th Meeting of States Parties (13MSP) to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), warmly welcomed all participants to the second meeting of the Coordination Committee under the Philippine Presidency. The draft agenda was presented and adopted without amendment.

3. Approval of minutes of previous Coordination Committee Meeting

The minutes of the Coordination Committee Meeting held on 19 November 2024 were reviewed and approved by the Committee without amendment.

4. Update on the activities undertaken by the Presidency up to the 13MSP

Ambassador Sorreta provided an update on the key activities undertaken by the Presidency since the last Coordination Committee meeting. He noted that outreach efforts had been a major focus, with increased engagement to raise awareness of the Convention. As part of this, he had been interviewed for a podcast episode of CCM Implementation Support Unit (ISU)'s *Meet the Makers* podcast series. This provided an opportunity for the President to discuss the Convention with a broader audience. He emphasized the importance of engaging with stakeholders interested in the work of the CCM.

The President reported on meetings he had held with Ambassador Tobias Privitelli of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) and Ms. Tamar Gabelnick of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines-Cluster Munition Coalition (ICBL-CMC). These discussions had provided insights into ongoing advocacy efforts and reinforced the need for States to advance their CCM commitments. The ICBL-CMC had particularly emphasized the urgency of action, noting that states sometimes moved too slowly in fulfilling their disarmament obligations. The Presidency had also met with the ISU to discuss various issues, some of which were being further addressed at the meeting.

The Presidency had been working along with the ISU to organize a regional meeting in Manila, noting that only two Southeast Asian States—Philippines and Laos—were States Parties to the Convention. Ambassador Sorreta expressed hope that this engagement would encourage additional States in Southeast Asia and the Pacific to join the Convention. He noted that small states in the region were more likely to join the Convention first, and that sponsorship would be key in facilitating their participation. He stated that the Presidency was working with the ISU on sponsorship arrangements and would update the ISU on the government procurement process for facilitating travel and participation.

On the substantive side, the Presidency had held discussions with Australia, Austria and Germany, particularly regarding universalization and implementation efforts. He thanked Australia for its support in transparency reporting, noting that the Philippines had outstanding annual reports, and that Australia had provided assistance in this regard.

Ambassador Sorreta had also met with the Permanent Representative of Moldova, who clarified that there were no plans for Moldova to withdraw from the Convention, despite

rumours to the contrary. Additionally, he had engaged with the Permanent Representative of Lithuania, informing him that it was unavoidable that Lithuania's withdrawal would be mentioned and that he wished to engage in open dialogue with Lithuania, including at the capital level, to manage the matter in a respectful manner. He emphasized the importance of keeping diplomatic channels open rather than isolating Lithuania, noting that its representatives had indicated their position was based on instructions from higher political levels. He expressed hope that Lithuania might reconsider its position in the future.

The President concluded his report and invited comments from Committee members. No objections or comments were raised.

5. Presentation and status of implementation of the work plans by the Thematic Coordinators up to the 13MSP

5.1 Transparency Measures (Australia)

Australia noted that longstanding reporting challenges remained a concern and welcomed ideas and suggestions from Committee members on addressing them. Australia informed that its work plan would be submitted and circulated in the near future and reiterated its openness to feedback. It encouraged innovative approaches to overcoming obstacles to reporting compliance, particularly for smaller States Parties.

Australia compared reporting challenges to another key administrative difficulty faced by small states, the payment of assessed contributions. It highlighted that states received multiple invoices for different disarmament conventions throughout the year, making it administratively burdensome, especially for those with limited bureaucratic capacity. To address this, Australia suggested that consolidating multiple invoices into a single annual invoice could streamline payments and improve engagement. It also observed that some small States Parties had outstanding contributions of very low amounts, reinforcing the need for greater administrative efficiency.

Australia further noted that smaller states often had minimal or no updates to report in their annual Article 7 transparency reports. Given the length and complexity of the reporting form, officials encountering it for the first time frequently struggled to complete it, particularly in countries with high bureaucratic turnover. Australia stressed the need for simplification and targeted outreach to assist such states in meeting their reporting obligations.

The President acknowledged the suggestion of a single invoice, noting that while it was a compelling idea, implementing it would be challenging.

Australia also highlighted the potential for regional engagement to facilitate reporting compliance, drawing on experiences from other international frameworks. It referenced UNESCO's education data collection process, where small Pacific states—previously unable to complete national reports—had benefited from a regionalized reporting mechanism that compiled data at the regional level before submission. Australia suggested that a similar approach could be explored for CCM reporting, particularly in the Pacific region, where administrative capacities were often limited.

Australia affirmed its standing offer to engage with the CCM and other conventional weapons treaties to address barriers to universalization, reporting and financial matters. It emphasized that universalization efforts were closely linked to administrative considerations, as some states hesitated to join the Convention due to concerns over the bureaucratic burden of reporting and financial contributions. Australia encouraged coordination with Universalization Coordinators and other stakeholders to develop practical solutions, including regional cooperation to ease these challenges. It also noted that similar discussions were underway within the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) framework, reinforcing the need for cross-treaty coordination on these issues.

The ISU Director, Ms. Pamela Moraga, welcomed these ideas and informed that the ISU already issues multi-year invoices for States Parties with small assessed contributions, a practice that had proven effective in improving payment rates. She also pointed out that the Article 7 reporting form had been simplified, requiring only the cover page to be completed for States Parties without updates. However, she agreed that further outreach was necessary to ensure States Parties were fully aware of these streamlined reporting mechanisms.

UNODA acknowledged the challenges faced by smaller missions, particularly in managing invoices issued at different times of the year for multiple Geneva-based disarmament treaties. It noted that even the CCM and APMBC invoices were not issued simultaneously, making it difficult for smaller delegations to track payments. UNODA supported greater coordination on invoicing schedules across disarmament conventions and informed the Committee that it was in the process of launching a Geneva Disarmament Calendar, which could include fixed dates for when invoices would be sent, helping States Parties better anticipate and manage their financial obligations. UNODA welcomed further discussions on this topic.

The President reflected on the broader challenges faced by small States Parties, particularly in the Pacific region, where reporting and financial obligations were closely scrutinized by national parliaments. He noted that small states often prioritized development-related funding, and when required to justify their contributions to disarmament treaties, they might struggle to rationalize the resource allocation within their governments.

The ISU Director added that confusion often arose due to the existence of two separate billing systems—one from UNODA and the other from the CCM ISU. She suggested that further coordination was needed to align messaging and ensure that States Parties clearly understood the distinction between the different financial contributions they were required to make.

UNODA proposed that this issue could be discussed in a dedicated session during the upcoming Intersessional Meeting or in a workshop, where practical solutions could be explored in more detail.

The President agreed that the issue of reporting and financial obligations for small states should be formally addressed in a dedicated meeting, or during a workshop during the Intersessional Meeting, as they directly impacted CCM universalization efforts. He noted that small states carefully consider treaty participation, as they have limited diplomatic and

administrative resources. He echoed Australia's point that regional mechanisms could help mainstream reporting practices for smaller states.

5.2 General Status and Operation (Austria and Germany)

Austria highlighted that the Coordinators on General Status and Operation had shared their work plan with the Coordination Committee members the day prior. While some implementation had already begun, their approach was structured around two key work streams: gender mainstreaming and strengthening the norm of the Convention, with a focus on synergies with other disarmament conventions and integrating the CCM into the broader humanitarian disarmament framework.

Under the gender mainstreaming work stream, Austria reported on a virtual workshop that had been held in collaboration with the APMBC gender focal points and other stakeholders. The workshop, which included contributions from UNIDIR and researchers, focused on gender considerations in victim assistance and explored synergies and approaches that could be adopted across disarmament frameworks. The discussion had been lively and insightful, and Austria informed that the Coordinators intended to continue building on this work. Austria indicated that the outcomes from this process might be presented at the upcoming CCM Intersessional Meeting or the 13MSP, though discussions on the exact format and scope were ongoing.

Regarding the strengthening the norm of the Convention work stream, Austria reported that the Coordinators had initiated discussions with various stakeholders and planned to continue these engagements throughout the first quarter of 2025. Their aim was to identify areas of synergy between the CCM and other humanitarian disarmament treaties and to highlight the value of the CCM within the broader disarmament framework. Austria also reported on their collaboration with the Universalization Coordinators, exploring ways in which their work could support universalization efforts by reinforcing the importance of the CCM when engaging with States not Party. Further development of these synergies was planned, with the possibility of integrating them into discussions at the Intersessional Meeting.

5.3 International Cooperation and Assistance (Netherlands and Switzerland)

In its second year in the role, Switzerland was pleased to inform that the Netherlands had joined the Coordination Committee as Co-Coordinator on International Cooperation and Assistance for the period 2024/2025. The two Coordinators announced that they had finalized their work plan, which had been submitted to the ISU.

As part of their planned activities, the Coordinators intended to host a joint informal meeting with the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance of the APMBC in the first quarter of 2025. The primary objective of this meeting would be to exchange views and best practices between the CCM and the APMBC working groups with the aim of strengthening synergies between the two committees.

Another key focus area for 2025 would be mapping existing and past country coalitions in affected states. The aims would be to gain an overview of currently active as well as previous

country coalitions, understand how they function, and identify key takeaways and lessons learnt. This would facilitate an exchange of views and best practices among donors, operators and affected States Parties, enhancing coordination and effectiveness in international cooperation and assistance efforts.

The Coordinators also planned, upon request, to follow up with States Parties with time-bound obligations under the Convention to discuss their needs in terms of international cooperation and assistance.

In closing, Switzerland informed that the Coordinators intended, upon request, to engage with the Clearance Coordinators with the aim of ensuring resource mobilization is better taken into account when developing extension requests.

5.4 Universalization (Norway and Peru)

Norway informed the Committee that the work plan had been submitted. Norway provided an overview of the Universalization Coordinators' plans for 2025, emphasizing that outreach efforts would be intensified immediately, with a focus on target states, which included Signatory States and other states that had expressed interest in joining the Convention. The majority of these states were in Africa, and the ISU had provided a list of priority states for engagement. Norway outlined that outreach would take place both in Geneva and through diplomatic channels in relevant capitals. Additionally, speaking points were being prepared for use in bilateral meetings with senior officials in these states.

Norway highlighted a planned engagement with Southern African states, scheduled to take place as a lunch meeting with Costa Rica and Sierra Leone. The event would address both the EWIPA Declaration and the CCM, particularly as many of these states were CCM signatories. Norway stressed that such high-level political meetings would be a key component of universalization efforts in 2025.

Norway reported that an Informal Working Group (IWG) on Universalization had been reconvened in December 2024 after a period of inactivity. The Coordinators found the meeting to be valuable and expressed appreciation to Australia for its suggestion to engage with the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. Norway saw potential in expanding cooperation between universalization efforts in the CCM and the APMBC, acknowledging that regional engagement was a crucial factor in bringing new states into the Convention.

Norway reiterated the Coordinators' willingness to contribute to the regional workshop in Manila and to support efforts in Southeast Asia and the Pacific.

Norway reported to have met with Moldova, and Moldova had reaffirmed that there were no plans to withdraw from the Convention. Regarding Lithuania, Norway emphasized the importance of maintaining an open and constructive dialogue, noting that Lithuania remained a close partner on a range of issues. Norway committed to continuing bilateral engagement with Lithuanian counterparts, both in Geneva and at the capital level, to encourage them to reconsider their withdrawal from the Convention and make it clear that they would always be welcome to rejoin.

Ambassador Sorreta noted that Coordinators had the authority to speak on behalf of their thematic areas and should make full use of available resources to engage with states. He reflected on the two aspects of universalization: broadening adherence to the Convention and strengthening the norm against cluster munitions. He pointed out that while the first track focused on securing more States Parties, the longer-term track was about pushing the norm to evolve in such a way that the use of cluster munitions would eventually be considered as unacceptable as other historically prohibited weapons.

The President further reflected on the paradox of international law, noting that while the law prohibits war, it also establishes rules on how war is conducted. He stressed the importance of strengthening international legal norms regarding the use of weapons such as cluster munitions and reinforcing the long-term impact of the Convention.

5.5 Clearance (France and Italy)

France informed the Committee that the Coordinators' work plan for 2025 had been submitted and that it was aligned with the Lausanne Action Plan (LAP). France outlined that the key objectives in their work plan focused on supporting States Parties in implementing their clearance obligations and analysing extension requests submitted under Article 4.

France reported that extension requests had been received from Chile, Mauritania, Somalia, Lebanon, and Afghanistan. These requests were currently being analysed in collaboration with partners, including civil society organizations. France noted that three meetings had already taken place to discuss the documents submitted by the five states and additional discussions would be held as part of their ongoing work.

France also outlined the Coordinators' plans to engage with relevant agencies to produce two working papers. The first paper would be on the importance of considering environmental impact in mine action. The second paper would focus on synergies between the CCM and the APMBC, particularly in relation to clearance methodologies and best practices. Additionally, France highlighted the importance of gender considerations in clearance operations and expressed the intention to further explore gender mainstreaming within the framework of both the CCM and APMBC, in collaboration with Gender Focal Points from both Conventions.

The President commended the detailed work being undertaken in the area of survey and clearance and noted that existing technologies and methodologies for landmine and cluster munition clearance were largely the same. He observed that advancements in clearance technologies could revolutionize the process, improving the detection of explosive remnants of war while minimizing risks to clearance workers. He encouraged continued innovation in clearance technology and expressed hope that future advancements would further improve the efficiency and precision of clearance operations.

5.6 Risk Education (Lao PDR)

Lao PDR expressed its gratitude to the ISU and GICHD for their support in developing the risk education work plan for 2025. The work plan focused on four key components: enhancing risk

education efforts within the CCM framework, following the appointment of the Risk Education Coordinator at the 12MSP; outlining specific activities to be undertaken; identifying key implementers and supporting partners; and establishing a timeline up to the 13MSP. Lao PDR informed the Committee that the work plan had already been submitted to its capital for review and approval.

5.7 National Implementation Measures (Iraq)

Iraq expressed its pleasure in continuing its role as Coordinator for National Implementation Measures (NIM) in its second year. It emphasized the importance of supporting States Parties in fulfilling their obligations under Article 9 of the Convention, as strong national implementation frameworks were essential to ensuring compliance.

Iraq recalled that it had engaged with the ISU and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to explore ways to assist States Parties in updating or drafting new legislation or administrative measures to implement the Convention. Through the ISU, Iraq had circulated existing tools such as New Zealand and the ICRC's model laws, both of which were available on the CCM website. Iraq had also distributed a survey to assess how States Parties could be encouraged to actively engage with Article 9.

Building on work from the previous year, Iraq noted that one of the main challenges identified was a limited awareness among some States Parties regarding their NIM obligations. To address this, Iraq had worked with the ISU, ICRC and CMC to draft a letter, currently available in English, which it planned to translate into Arabic, French and Spanish to enhance accessibility. Iraq explained that language barriers had been a significant obstacle in the previous year's survey, as many stakeholders were not proficient in English. The translated letter would be shared with the Presidency and circulated to all States Parties in the following week, with the goal of increasing engagement in Article 9 implementation.

Iraq also emphasized the value of peer-to-peer information sharing among States Parties and presented a framework for a database that would compile information on the status of national implementation measures. The database would allow States Parties to review and compare legislative and administrative measures adopted by others, facilitating the exchange of best practices. Iraq confirmed that the framework had been finalized and shared with the ISU in December 2024 and was ready for further discussion.

Ambassador Sorreta expressed interest in reviewing existing national legislation on the CCM. He cited Article 21 of the Convention as an example, noting that differing interpretations of prohibitions could influence how States approached universalization. He emphasized the need to balance strict compliance with flexibility, allowing States to remain engaged with the Convention rather than risking withdrawal due to restrictive national interpretations.

The President also noted that the Victim Assistance and Stockpile Destruction Coordinators were not present, and that the Committee was still seeking an additional Coordinator for Stockpile Destruction. He stated that the Presidency would encourage States to fill this vacancy.

The President thanked the Coordinators for their updates and invited Committee members and observers to provide comments on the work plans.

The Cluster Munition Coalition (CMC) expressed appreciation for the presentation of work plans and reports on activities that had already taken place. It supported the prioritization of universalization and strengthening of the norm and urged greater action and ambition in these areas. Acknowledging the challenging times for the Convention, the CMC was encouraged by ongoing engagement and stressed the importance of keeping the door open for States to join or reengage.

Regarding Moldova, the CMC shared that it had also met with Moldovan officials at the end of the previous year and had received assurances that there was no intention to leave the Convention. However, it underscored the need for continued vigilance, particularly with the new administration in the United States. The CMC reminded that seven rounds of cluster munition transfers to Ukraine from the United States had occurred in the past two years.

The CMC commended the reestablishment of the IWG on Universalization and thanked Norway for leading this effort. It emphasized the need for greater outreach efforts, particularly in Africa, where several signatory states had yet to ratify the Convention. The CMC stressed that efforts should involve repeating a consistent message across different actors and applying persistent engagement to gain new States Parties.

Looking ahead, the CMC anticipated participating in the universalization workshop in Manila, highlighting its commitment to contributing and encouraging further progress in the region. It also reaffirmed its readiness to collaborate with Austria and other stakeholders on promoting the norms of the Convention and advancing the stakeholder dialogue. Additionally, the CMC praised the strong national campaign in the Philippines and confirmed its continued work with national and local actors, including survivor networks, to advance universalization efforts at both national and international levels.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) reaffirmed its commitment to supporting universalization and national implementation measures (NIM). It acknowledged the challenges faced by the CCM and other disarmament treaties, underscoring the importance of strengthening the norm of the Convention. The ICRC welcomed Austria's efforts in this area and expressed its willingness to provide support.

The ICRC affirmed that it would be participating in the upcoming Arab Group Meeting organized by Iraq and the ISU in February and also looking forward to contributing to the Manila Workshop.

The ICRC thanked Iraq for the database proposal on NIM, noting that the ICRC had been in discussions with Iraq on this initiative. It acknowledged that gaps in NIM remained a challenge, and that even when national measures existed, it was often difficult to determine how cluster munitions were criminalized in national legislation. The ICRC encouraged continued efforts in this area, noting that its internal legal team could explore synergies with Iraq's initiative to enhance NIM efforts.

Ambassador Sorreta thanked the observers for their contributions and acknowledged the value of collaborative efforts in universalization and strengthening the norm of the Convention. He noted that ensuring national implementation through legal measures was crucial, particularly in addressing gaps in criminalization and enforcement.

6. Update of the ISU

The ISU Director welcomed Committee members and extended best wishes for 2025 on behalf of the ISU team. She remarked that 2025 would be both a challenging and busy year and emphasized that the ISU would rely on the guidance and wisdom of the Coordination Committee throughout the process.

She informed that the ISU had been engaging with Ambassador-level and capital-based representatives and other stakeholders to brainstorm possible topics, in line with the ISU's mandate as defined by the 12MSP funding decision, while also planning the year ahead.

6.1 CCM meetings

The ISU Director reported that, on 11 December 2024, the ISU supported the Universalization Coordinators in hosting the first IWG meeting on Universalization since the 12MSP. The virtual meeting brought together 11 CCM States Parties, as well as representatives from the ICRC and the CMC, and provided a platform for exchanging experiences and perspectives. Participants discussed effective strategies for promoting adherence to the Convention, advancing universalization, and tackling the challenges that impede progress in these efforts. A concrete proposal was put forward by Australia to engage with the Pacific Islands Forum, which could be further explored.

The Director reported that the ISU had participated in the expert workshop organized by UNIDIR and the CCM Gender Focal Points (Austria and Germany) on 28 January 2025. The virtual workshop focused on gender-sensitive victim assistance in the CCM and other disarmament instruments. The ISU looked forward to reviewing the report that was highlighted during the meeting.

The Director also informed the Committee that, as mandated by the 12MSP, the ISU was supporting the 13MSP President in organizing a series of Stakeholders Dialogues. These dialogues would be open to States Parties and other stakeholders to reflect on key challenges facing the Convention and to propose concrete actions for consideration at the 13MSP. The ISU had been actively consulting with several States Parties to plan these meetings, with further information to be shared in due course. Coordinators were encouraged to revisit their respective thematic areas and consider the potential for dedicated dialogues. It was clarified that Coordinators would not be expected to organize these meetings themselves, but were invited to share ideas with the ISU for possible topics that could contribute to strengthening the Convention and its norms.

6.2 Updates on extension requests

The ISU Director reported that the ISU had worked closely with Afghanistan, Chile, Lebanon, Mauritania, and Somalia to review their draft Article 4 extension requests. Detailed written feedback had been provided to each State Party to strengthen their submissions and ensure alignment with the requirements of the Convention and the Lausanne Action Plan. In addition, virtual meetings were held with the respective States Parties to offer further guidance and substantive support where needed.

She informed the Committee that all States Parties requiring deadline extensions for consideration at the 13MSP had submitted their official requests. These requests had been circulated to all CCM States Parties and published on the CCM website to ensure transparency and enable consultation. The Director noted that all States Parties, not only Analysis Group members, were encouraged to review and comment on the requests. She highlighted that four of the five extension requests had been submitted nine months ahead of the 13MSP deadline, as required by the Convention, with the exception of Mauritania.

It was further reported that the Article 4 Analysis Group had already begun reviewing the submitted extension requests. Initial feedback had been shared with some of the requesting States Parties, enabling them to refine their submissions and address any outstanding issues. The Director thanked the Coordinators on Clearance, France and Italy, for their significant contribution to this process, noting that this coordination role was among the most time-consuming.

6.3 2024 CCM resolution

The ISU Director reported that on 2 December 2024, the United Nations General Assembly voted on the 2024 resolution on the Convention on Cluster Munitions. The results were as follows: 121 votes in favour, 1 vote against (Russian Federation) and 33 abstentions.

She noted that this outcome represented the lowest number of States voting in favour of the annual CCM resolution since its inception began in 2015. Of particular concern was that 38 UN Member States, including a number of CCM States Parties that typically support the resolution, were absent during the vote.

The ISU promptly informed all CCM States Parties of the voting results and encouraged those who were unable to participate to take the necessary steps to ensure their participation in future votes.

6.4 ISU finances

The ISU Director reported that, regarding the ISU's 2024 annual budget, less than 89% of the total budget had been received. A total of CHF 423'730 had been contributed by 68 States Parties, against the approved 2024 budget of CHF 477'724. Since the last update, two States Parties that had previously informed the ISU of their intention to contribute had provided a combined total of CHF 49'942. The Director noted that three major contributors had not fully fulfilled their mandatory contributions under Articles 7a and 7b, leaving a combined total of CHF 137'164 in outstanding contributions.

The Director recalled that the CCM ISU's financial model, established at the First Review Conference in 2015, was based on assessed contributions derived from the United Nations scale of assessments, adjusted for each State Party. This differed from the model used by the APMBC, which was based on voluntary pledges. The CCM model was intended to provide predictability, with the ISU relying on the mandatory contributions of all States Parties to meet its annual budget.

However, with only slightly more than half of the 112 States Parties contributing to the ISU's 2024 budget, the ISU had had to depend on additional contributions from a few States Parties under Article 7c to cover the shortfall. The Director highlighted that this reliance on 7c contributions had been a recurring challenge since the financial model was implemented in 2016. She suggested that it might be timely to consider revising the financial model.

The Director also reported that the United Nations General Assembly adopts a new three-year scale of assessments every three years. The latest scale for the period 2025–2027 was published in mid-January 2025, and the ISU had finalized and issued the respective invoices to all CCM States Parties earlier that week, including to Lithuania for the 2025 financial year.

6.5 CCM communications

The ISU Director reported that, on 3 December 2024, a new episode of the *Meet the Makers* podcast featuring an interview with the 13MSP President, Ambassador Carlos D. Sorreta, was released. She encouraged Committee members to listen to the episode if they had not already done so.

She informed that the podcast series, created in March 2024, was intended as an innovative tool to communicate with a wider audience about the Convention and its goals. It had also served as a platform to highlight the expertise of key Convention partners. From March to December 2024, the podcast had reached over 1,000 listeners. The Director noted that the initiative had supported engagement with new audiences, including youth and humanitarian actors, and had contributed to strengthening collaboration with existing partners. She added that additional 2025 episodes were underway, with a new episode expected to be released that week.

The Director informed that the *2025 Youth for Humanitarian Disarmament Multimedia Contest* was already in progress, with initial discussions having taken place with UNODA and the Presidency. She noted that the contest launch would take place on 5 March, which coincided with the International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness, and that further information would be shared in due course. She invited all attendees to pick up a printed poster on their way out, featuring artwork by an Indian artist submitted in the 2024 contest, offered as a gift from the ISU. She acknowledged with appreciation that the CCM Youth Contest was launched under the leadership of the Mexican 12MSP Presidency in 2024, in collaboration with UNODA and with support from the European Union.

6.6 Audit of Swiss contributions to the GICHD

The ISU Director reported that the Swiss Federal Audit Office released an audit on 19 November 2024 concerning Swiss contributions to the GICHD, which included references to the ISUs. The CCM and APMBC ISU Directors were not consulted during the audit and received the report on 10 December. A meeting with the GICHD Director and Head of Finance took place on 17 December to clarify the audit's conclusions.

On 19 December, the ISU Directors were informed they could respond to the audit and were given one day to provide their feedback, as it was the final deadline to submit comments to the auditors. The audit recommended that the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) take measures to ensure financial transparency of the ISU and proposed that the GICHD be granted a right of scrutiny over ISU financial matters, particularly regarding Swiss contributions.

The audit raised concerns about the clarity of the hosting agreements, stating that while the GICHD had financial and administrative obligations to the ISUs, it had no authority over ISU governance. It noted that services provided to the ISUs were not billed and that this limited financial oversight. It described the legal arrangement between the GICHD and the ISUs as unclear and recommended strengthening governance. The audit also acknowledged the GICHD's role in supporting implementation and monitoring of the CCM and APMBC.

The Director reported that, in response, the ISU Directors jointly submitted a letter to the GICHD, outlining concerns and presenting counterarguments. They highlighted that the Hosting Agreements, approved by States Parties, defined oversight responsibilities and that the ISUs operated in line with those agreements, remained accountable to States Parties, and had consistently passed external audits conducted under GICHD financial procedures.

The ISU Directors also noted the ISUs' contribution to GICHD activities and reaffirmed their willingness to engage constructively. However, they expressed concern that the audit findings could affect the provisions under the Hosting Agreements.

The Director reported that the ISU Directors and GICHD had agreed to submit an explanatory note for annexing to the audit. However, they were later informed that this would not be accepted by the auditors. Instead, the note would instead be published on the GICHD website. The audit was submitted to the Swiss Parliament on 17 January 2025 and will be made public.

The Director asked the Coordination Committee to take note of this situation. She had requested a meeting with the Swiss Mission to discuss the audit's impact on the Hosting Agreement review and indicated that discussions with the GICHD were ongoing in good faith.

7. Any other business

The ISU Director informed the Committee that the initial proposed dates for the 2025 CCM Intersessional Meetings had been 7–8 April 2025, to take place back-to-back with the 28th International Meeting of Mine Action National Directors and United Nations Advisers (NDM-UN28) in Geneva. She explained that holding the meetings during this period would have benefited from the presence of key stakeholders already in Geneva for the NDM. However, the GICHD had informed the ISU that it would not be in a position to service the CCM meetings

during that week due to the scheduling of a technical donors meeting for Ukraine. As an alternative, the GICHD had proposed 14–15 April 2025. The Director noted that, by then, there would likely be few stakeholders remaining in Geneva, if any. She encouraged feedback on the format and content of the Intersessional Meeting.

The Director thanked all States Parties and the Presidency for conducting démarches with regard to Lithuania ahead of the 6 March deadline and expressed hope that further démarches could still be organized. She also announced that the APMBC ISU would be holding a victim assistance retreat on 11 February and confirmed that the CCM Victim Assistance and International Cooperation and Assistance Coordinators would also be invited to attend. The invitation had been received and confirmed, and the Director encouraged all invited Coordinators to participate.

Ambassador Sorreta commented on the broader issue of secretariat structures for disarmament conventions. He recalled that, when secretariats for conventions were established, direct hosting agreements were made with the host country, not with an organization. He explained that in the case of the CCM ISU, the entity hosting it was primarily funded by one State Party, which meant that the budget requirements of that State Party treated the ISU as a public entity to ensure financial accountability. The host State Party needed to ensure that funds were used properly and not as a blank cheque. He noted that the issue stemmed from the current structure, in which a host entity funded by one State Party was providing services to a Convention composed of multiple States Parties.

The President noted that a solution might be to revisit the structure of the CCM ISU. He informed that Panama had volunteered to look into the issue. He suggested that the most radical solution would be to identify an alternative hosting arrangement that could also resolve related issues—such as granting the ISU an independent status or enabling the use of the UN laissez-passer, among other privileges. He enquired about the ISU's physical presence at the GICHD, and the ISU Director responded that the ISU operated out of two rooms. The President concluded that the current hosting situation warranted further examination.

The Director clarified that during the first meeting with the GICHD Director and Head of Finance, it had been clarified that the audit recommendation to “ensure the financial transparency of the ISUs” referred specifically to the Swiss contribution to the ISU, which is handled by the GICHD finance department. This contribution covers office space, photocopying, and administrative and financial services, with allocations determined by the GICHD. As such, the recommendation should have been directed at the GICHD finance department.

Mexico, speaking as the past Presidency, thanked the ISU Director for the comprehensive report. Regarding the UN General Assembly resolution, Mexico expressed disappointment at the outcome and explained that the resolution had been scheduled as the first item in the afternoon session. Having been present in New York at the time, Mexico had observed that many delegations were absent from the room due to the early start of the session. Mexico had maintained communication with its mission in New York to monitor the voting figures and had reached out to UNODA, which explained the procedures for registering post-votes. Several States Parties, including the Netherlands, were not able to vote during the session but

had submitted their votes afterward. When the results were published, Mexico again contacted the Secretariat, which assured that these additional votes would be reflected in the final act. However, this document had yet to be released at the time of the meeting.

Mexico congratulated the ISU on the communication strategy and confirmed it would participate again in the youth contest, describing it as a valuable promotional tool that enabled broader stakeholder engagement. Mexico also shared some initial reactions to the audit, noting surprise that the audit of the GICHD had included the ISU. It considered the ISU and the GICHD to be separate entities and viewed the audit's attribution of governance and financial scrutiny responsibilities as excessive. The ISU, in Mexico's view, is accountable to States Parties, not to the GICHD, and further clarity would be needed on the responses and the way forward.

On the broader issue of strengthening the ISU, Mexico noted that the final report of the 12MSP mandated three areas of work: first, revising the Hosting Agreement in line with the agreement itself; second, identifying ways to strengthen the ISU within its existing autonomy and institutional framework; and third, examining longer-term options for enhancing the institution. Mexico viewed these three aspects as separate but interrelated and encouraged careful consideration of each as part of preparations for the 13MSP.

The President thanked Mexico and agreed that it had provided a clear and helpful overview of the situation. He welcomed Mexico's willingness to look further into the Hosting Agreement, which he described as a situation where an entity meant to be accountable to a collective of States Parties was being subjected to oversight by a single State Party. He stressed that this should not be allowed to continue and looked forward to concrete proposals.

The Director reiterated that the Hosting Agreement was between the States Parties and the GICHD. The President added that the arrangement resembled a State-to-State agreement, with Switzerland providing significant funds to host the ISU. He expressed hope that the matter could be resolved ahead of the 13MSP and not postponed to the 3RC, so that Lao PDR, as incoming President, could focus on preparations for the Review Conference rather than this issue.

The Director reminded the Committee that the dates for the CCM Intersessional Meeting would need to be decided. The President replied that, due to scheduling constraints, 14-15 April seemed to be the most feasible dates at the moment. He stated that the original proposal to hold the meeting back-to-back with the NDM would have been ideal and that the Presidency would make another attempt to secure those dates. If unsuccessful, the meetings would be held on 14–15 April. An official announcement would be made in due course.

8. Conclusion of the meeting

In closing, Ambassador Sorreta thanked all participants for their active engagement and valuable contributions to the discussions.
