

Introduction: Cooperation and assistance

Mr./Mme. President, Ladies and Gentlemen, dear Colleagues,

On behalf of Chile and Austria, Co-Coordination on Cooperation and Assistance, I have the pleasure to introduce this session.

Cooperation and assistance is an obligation under the Convention that concerns all States Parties. Whereas some aspects are specifically addressed to States Parties seeking assistance with the aim to maximise their opportunities to receive assistance in an effective way, others are clearly related to all partners in a cooperation and assistance relationship. The spirit of partnership is key to all efforts in the framework of this Treaty.

The coordinators are grateful to all stakeholders that have engaged actively in the process of drafting the Dubrovnik Action Plan section on cooperation and assistance under the guidance of the President of the Review Conference. We are confident that the Action Plan provides both, a clear vision where to go and concrete proposals on how get there.

In the drafting process, we have first taken stock of progress. In the five years since the entry into force of the Convention, 27 States as well as a range of expert organisations have provided financial, technical or material assistance. The regular meetings of states parties were used for technical exchanges on methodologies in clearance and stockpile destruction that are time and cost efficient. A focus was put also on identifying best practices and highlighting south-south and triangular cooperation.

What were the challenges identified. One challenge remains the predictability of financial resources and establishment of long-term partnerships where feasible. The sharing and transfer of skills and technical advice was seen as another area with much more potential. It was also highlighted that not enough was known about the needs of States Parties and that affected States could greatly benefit from clearly communicating their needs against the backdrop of national plans with benchmarks and timeframes for implementation. In the area of victim assistance, discussions have been initiated on how to ensure that by integrating victim assistance into the broader development and disability frameworks, policies and plans, it can be ensured in a measurable way that the rights and needs of survivors, affected families and communities are taken into account and actions to this end will need to be advanced over the coming years.

The Dubrovnik Action Plan is responsive to these challenges and provides guidance on how to overcome them. What we may expect from the next five years cycle strengthened partnerships at all levels and among all relevant stakeholders, multi-year cooperation where feasible, ensuring higher predictability and sustainability as well as widely-shared and applied cost-effective and innovative practices and strengthened results-based programming. On the side of recipient States we may expect strengthened national ownership and a clear communication of needs and embedding of request for assistance into national strategies and plans as well as strengthened reporting with timelines and benchmarks. Synergies with related areas of work and international legal instruments will continue to be important for advancing our work in this area.

Cooperation and assistance is not an end in itself. Strong partnerships and effective assistance will however contribute in all areas to strengthen the universalization and implementation of the Convention and the development of its norms. We look forward to working with all stakeholders towards this end.

Thank you, Mr./Mme. President.