



Standing Committee on the General Status and Operation of the Convention
25 June 2004

**Update on the Implementation Support Unit
by Ambassador Martin Dahinden
Director of the GICHD**

Mr. President,
Dear friends and colleagues,

It is the last time that I am providing an update on the Implementation Support Unit in my capacity as Director of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining.

The end of one's term is always a natural time for reflection. In this regard, please allow me to reflect upon this unique mechanism – the Implementation Support Unit – that you, the States Parties, have mandated us to establish.

Earlier today many of you attended an event at which Stuart Maslen, a renowned expert on humanitarian affairs, launched a legal commentary on the Convention.

In this commentary, Mr. Maslen wrote that the negotiators of the Convention “did not provide for a formal secretariat;” that in Oslo in 1997 “*it was argued that resources should be devoted to mine clearance and victim assistance rather than to set up new structures*”, and, that there was a sense on the part of some that they “*did not wish to see decision-making power ceded to an outside body.*”

In 2001, you, the States Parties, commenced discussions and noted that after two years of implementation “*it (had) become clear that the extent of our future success and sustainability of the process (would) hinge on ensuring adequate, but limited, continuing dedicated support for States Parties related to the (Intersessional Work Programme) and the implementation of the Convention.*”

You subsequently mandated the establishment of the Implementation Support Unit by the GICHD and we proceeded in concluding an agreement that realized the ISU's establishment.

This unique action was consistent with both the practical-minded culture of the Ottawa Process and the original insistence expressed during the Oslo negotiations that a large, expensive structure not be created.

I am extremely proud that during my term as Director of the GICHD I was able to see the ISU come into being. But I am ever more pleased with the fact that with an annual budget totaling less than € 400,000 and with only 2.5 permanent staff members, the ISU has provided you – the States Parties – with the dedicated support necessary for you to do your work.

While the ISU is a part of the GICHD, its establishment is a symbol of the Convention's principle of States Parties' ownership over implementation. You, after all, took the formal decision at the 3MSP which ultimately resulted in the ISU. Moreover, you have retained responsibility for the manner in which the ISU is funded.

In this regard, I wish to recall for you that in the ISU's foundation document it is stated that "*States Parties will endeavour to assure the necessary financial resources.*" To date in 2004, I am pleased to report to you that the following States Parties have made contributions to the ISU Voluntary Trust Fund: Australia, Canada, Hungary, Malaysia, Mexico, Norway and the United Kingdom. With Germany a contribution agreement recently has been signed.

I am grateful for the manner in which these States Parties have heeded the call to fund the ISU; But I must report to you that the 2004 ISU budget is still not fully funded and encourage additional States Parties to provide contributions and to consider doing so on an annual – as opposed to one-time – basis.

With that said, I would like to ask – through you, Mr. co-chair, the Manager of the Implementation Support Unit, Mr. Kerry Brinkert, to take the floor.