

Towards a new financial model for the Implementation Support Unit

Discussion paper by the President of the Tenth Meeting of the States Parties

September 2011

Introduction

The Tenth Meeting of the States Parties tasked the President to establish an informal open-ended working group to examine new models for the financing of the ISU, and present recommendations and draft decisions on the most feasible comprehensive financing model for adoption by the 11MSP.

The OEWG met in March and in May to discuss general principles and possible alternatives, based on a discussion paper from the President, outlining different models, based on the tasks defined in the ISU Directive, including States Parties' approval of the budget and work plan.

The President conducted bilateral consultations with states and other actors following the March and May meetings, including during the intersessional meetings in June. Consultations show a variety of views regarding a model for financing the ISU. In the President's view it is possible to discern some common principles for a hybrid financing model, combining assessed and voluntary contributions that could be the basis for a decision by the States Parties at the 11MSP.

Principles

The consultation process shows that there is broad agreement among States Parties that a well functioning ISU is crucial to the timely implementation of the Convention, and that the ISU so far has delivered high-quality services to the States Parties in this respect.

There is also general agreement that the **present configuration of the ISU is to be preserved**, as it is considered to be a compromise. The task of the States Parties, therefore, is to establish a funding model that generates approximately CHF 1.2 million per year.

There also seems to be a high degree of agreement that in order to ensure continuity of the work, it is essential to construct a financing model for the ISU that is **sustainable** and that provides the unit with a reasonable degree of financial **predictability**. The consultations also show a high level of acceptance for the principle of **equitable burden sharing** based on common but differentiated responsibilities.

Finally, there seems to be a fairly broad understanding that it would be productive to establish a distinction between tasks to be financed by **assessed contributions** and those to be financed by **voluntary contributions**. Such a distinction may productively be drawn between **general implementation support** and **individual implementation support**.

Elements for a new financial model

Building on these principles, and following the consultations undertaken so far, it is suggested that States Parties agree on a financial model that comprises the following elements:

- The ISU to be financed through a hybrid model, comprising both assessed and voluntary contributions including the Swiss in-kind contribution via the GICHD.
- Assessed contributions would cover costs related to providing general implementation support, including as a minimum the costs for operating a secretariat with 3 fulltime positions. This could include those activities listed under the headings “General support; Community and Liaison; Article 5 extensions process” in the ISU 2011 Budget. (2011 Total: CHF 615.000)
- Voluntary contributions would cover costs related to providing individual implementation support. This would include those activities listed under the heading “Article 5 implementation; Victim Assistance and implementation support” in the ISU 2011 Budget (2011 Total: CHF 435.000¹)
- Due to different budget cycles and national approval processes such a model could be implemented in time for the ISU 2013 Budget year.

Next steps

1. At the next meeting of the OEWG, the President will seek the support from the States Parties to make a recommendation to the 11MSP to change the financing of the ISU from the present voluntary model to a new hybrid model, comprising both assessed and voluntary contributions.
2. If this is agreed by the States Parties at the 11 MSP the President of the 11MSP should be asked to develop the practical details of this new hybrid model. In addition, the President should work together with the ISU to ensure that the proposed budget and work plan for the financial year 2013 reflect this model and is presented to the States Parties, for discussion and final approval at the 12 MSP. The new model will then be effective for 2013.
3. If the States Parties do not support a move from a purely voluntary to a hybrid financial model, the President will recommend continuing with the present voluntary model, and discontinuing the process towards a new model (OEWG) until such time when States Parties decide otherwise.

¹ The total budget for 2011 of 1.05 million CHF does not include the costs of a VA specialist as the position remains unstaffed until funding is secured.