

Your Excellency, Chief Executive of Afghanistan, Dr. Abdullah Abdullah,
Madam President,
Excellencies, dear colleagues,

It is a pleasure for me to be here with you today and to be able to say a few words about the ISU's activities.

As many of you know the ISU is mandated to:

- Providing support to all States Parties through support to the Convention's implementation machinery and office holders,
- Providing advice and technical support to individual States Parties, on implementation and universalisation,
- Communicating and providing information about the Convention, including towards States not parties and the public, and communicate the decisions and outcomes of the Convention's meetings,
- Keeping records of formal and informal meetings under the Convention, and
- Liaising, and coordinating as appropriate, with relevant international organisations that participate in the work of the Convention.

It is within this framework that all ISU's work plans are developed and this year is no exception. This ensures a certain degree of continuity in the ISU's work and in the support that we provide to you and the Convention. The office holders that we support however are different every year and they guide where the emphasis of the work is placed.

Allow me to point out some of the key objectives of the ISU work plan:

- Firstly, our aim in 2018 is to continue our support to the Presidency, so we will work closely with Afghanistan and give support and advice on all areas of the President's mandate which includes universalization, stockpile destruction and reporting.
- Secondly, we will continue supporting the Convention's four Committees to ensure that they are able to implement their respective mandates related to the Convention's objectives of mine clearance, victim assistance, cooperation and assistance and compliance.

- Thirdly, we will continue our support to States Parties in the implementation of their obligations under the Convention and their commitments under the Maputo Action Plan. Within this support one of the key areas which the ISU spends a considerable amount of its time on includes support to the 31 States Parties that have mine clearance obligations, in particular this year the ISU will provide support and advice to 15 States in the development of requests for extension of mine clearance deadlines and declarations of completion (the ISU will advise 6 with clearance deadlines in 2019¹ and 9 with deadlines in 2020²).

The ISU will also ensure that follow up is carried with 4 States Parties³ that have been granted an extension of their clearance deadline and have been asked to come back with updated work plans or updated information on the implementation of Article 5.

The ISU will also continue providing support to States Parties on reporting as this has been identified as an issue by the Committees and the President that needs improving.

- Another matter which is relatively new to our Convention includes efforts by the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance to support affected states to fulfil their remaining obligations in an effective and expedient way through the individualised approach. The individualised approach provides interested States with a platform to discuss their remaining challenges and connect with relevant stakeholders. In this context, we'll support the participation of relevant States Parties in these activities.
- In addition to these matters the ISU will spend a considerable amount of time supporting the efforts of the President and the Committees in preparing for the Convention's meetings: the intersessional meetings (7-8 June 2018) and the 17th Meeting of the States Parties (26-30 November). We will also ensure that that the proceedings and decisions of these meeting are recorded and followed up on.

We also intend to continue our coordination with all relevant partners and we will communicate on the achievements of the Convention through the Convention's website as well as through our social media channels.

¹ BiH, Croatia, Cyprus, Serbia, Sudan and the UK.

² Argentina, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Niger, Tajikistan and Yemen.

³ Eritrea, Iraq, Niger and Peru.

As Juan Carlos mentioned, the ISU is also working to provide enhanced support to the States Parties in the area of victim assistance as highlighted in the four-year work plan.

These are in short, the main areas of work for the ISU in 2018, should any of you require more information on our activities, we would be more than happy to provide more details to you.

Thank you.