
**Fifth Review Conference of the States Parties to the
Convention on the Prohibition of the Use,
Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of
Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction**

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**First Preparatory Meeting
Geneva, 20 June 2024**

Item 5 of the provisional agenda

Exchange of views on the preparation of documents for the Fifth Review Conference

**Reflections on the Convention's Meeting Programme and
Machinery**

Submitted by the President^{*,}**

I. Introduction

1. The implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention is facilitated by a machinery including the Convention's informal and formal meetings and through the mandates of the President and the Convention's four Committees as established by the States Parties at their Third Review Conference in 2014 and reviewed by the Fourth Review Conference in 2019.

2. The Fifth Review Conference provides an opportunity to review the need and the nature of meetings (both formal and informal) and agree on the meetings programme for the period until the Sixth Review Conference in 2029. Likewise, the Fifth Review Conference provides an opportunity to review the machinery established at the Third Review Conference and reviewed by the Fourth Review Conference. This document reviews/outlines the current machinery and its operation, highlighting relevant matters to support the development of decisions to be taken at the Fifth Review Conference in this regard.

3. In reviewing the meeting programme and the machinery, consideration should be given to how best support the efforts of the States Parties in implementing the Convention and the future Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan. States Parties should consider the following questions:

- (a) Does the current machinery and meetings programme need to be adapted to best support implementation over the next 5 years?
- (b) If yes, what adaptations would be necessary?

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

** The present report was submitted to the conference services for processing after the deadline so as to include the most recent information.



II. The Convention's Meetings Programme

The Meetings of the States Parties

4. The Fourth Review Conference agreed (i) to convene annually, until the Fifth Review Conference, a Meeting of the States Parties for up to five days at the end of November or beginning of December; (ii) to hold the Fifth Review Conference at the end of 2024; (iii) to continue to include in the agenda of the annual Meetings of the States Parties and the Fifth Review Conference an agenda item on the "Status of the assessed contributions received pursuant to Article 14 of the Convention".

5. Since the Fourth Review Conference, Meetings of the States Parties have been held over five days. During the period of 2020-2021 the Meetings of the States Parties were affected by the Covid-19 global pandemic which led the meetings to be held online. While this caused disruptions, the Meetings of the States Parties were able to proceed, returning to an in-person format in 2022.

6. Meetings of States Parties since the Fourth Review Conference:

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>Programme</i>
18MSP (2020)	5 days	Usual programme (online)
19MSP (2021)	5 days	Usual programme and one thematic panel (online)
20MSP (2022)	5 days	Usual programme and one thematic panel (in person)
21MSP (2023)	5 days	Usual programme and one thematic panel (in person)

7. Regarding the Meetings of the States Parties:

- (a) The five day duration has been sufficient to allow States Parties to consider matters regarding the implementation of the Convention (as provided for in Article 11 on the Convention);
- (b) The holding of a thematic panel during the Meeting of the States Parties has provided an important opportunity for States Parties to hold informal discussions on a topic of interest to the States Parties and in line with the priorities of the President;
- (c) Given the financial status of the Convention, the addition of an agenda item on finance is now considered standard practice. Nevertheless, it is important to highlight that matters concerning finances have been stabilised in the period since the Fourth Review Conference and did not affect the programme of the Meetings of the States Parties as was the case during the period between the Third and Fourth Review Conference;
- (d) The Meetings of the States Parties continue to be important opportunities for mine-affected States Parties to provide an update on progress and challenges in implementation of the Convention, as well as for other States Parties and organizations to offer their viewpoints on the implementation of the Convention;
- (e) Despite the fact that general statements are generally discouraged, the Meetings of the States Parties continue to be an important opportunity for those States Parties that do not have key obligations to fulfil to state their political commitment to the humanitarian aims of the Convention and share information about how they support the implementation of the Convention;
- (f) The Meetings of the States Parties continue to be an important opportunity for States not party to provide updates concerning their efforts towards accession to

the Convention or closer alignment with the humanitarian aims of the Convention;

- (g) The Meetings of the States Parties have also been an important forum for informal discussions on the margins to inform implementation in a more detailed manner, allowing for example the hosting of Individualised Approach meetings.

Intersessional Meetings

8. The Fourth Review Conference agreed (iv) to continue to hold Intersessional Meetings annually in Geneva for a minimum of two days of plenary meeting; (v) to maintain the informal nature of the intersessional meetings and consider adding on an annual basis, either (a) a thematic segment during the two-day intersessional meetings, or (b) a day of thematic discussions, to allow that topics relevant to the Convention be addressed, including the status of implementation of the Oslo Action Plan. The President of the annual Meeting of the States Parties will consider and decide on these options in consultation with the Coordinating Committee. Further to provisions of the 2011 agreement between the States Parties and the GICHD concerning implementation support for the Convention, the Conference expressed its appreciation for Switzerland's support, through the GICHD, for the Intersessional Meetings.

9. The issues covered by the Intersessional Meetings have remained the same as prior to the Fourth Review Conference, with an additional thematic segment having been added each year.

10. As with the Meetings of the States Parties, during the period of 2020-2021, the Intersessional Meetings were affected by the Covid-19 global pandemic which led the meetings to be held online. While this caused disruptions, the Intersessional Meetings proceeded as planned by the President and the Convention's thematic Committees. To better fit an online format, the meetings programme had to be adapted and included a series of panel discussion led by the President and the Convention's four thematic Committees. The Intersessional Meetings returned to an in-person format in 2022. It is important to note that the informal nature of the Intersessional Meetings allows for more flexibility in terms of the agenda and programme.

11. Intersessional Meetings since the Fourth Review Conference:

<i>Dates</i>	<i>Duration</i>
30 June – 2 July 2020	3 days (online) included a series of thematic discussions
22-24 June 2021	3 days (online) included a series of thematic discussions
20-22 June 2022	3 day included two thematic discussions
19-21 June 2023	3 days include a day of thematic discussions

12. Regarding the Intersessional Meetings:

- (a) A certain time-pressure has been felt by delegations during the three-day Intersessional Meetings. While the States Parties have requested additional information concerning implementation the Committees have had to ask delegations to either shorten their statements or submit them in written form. A balance needs to be struck given the importance of the information delivered by representatives of States Parties during the Intersessional Meetings. A minimum of three days is necessary to carry out the work of the Intersessional Meetings;
- (b) Overall the inclusion of thematic discussions has been viewed as positive in drawing out key issues in implementation in the lead up to the formal meetings of the States Parties. Sometimes, some of the topics selected for the thematic

discussions would have benefited from having more allocated. However, a balanced needs to be struck between the time allotted for national statements and for thematic discussions;

- (c) Since the Fourth Review Conference, there has been an increased direct interaction between the Convention's machinery and the States Parties which has taken place in the margins of the Intersessional Meetings including bilateral meetings with mine-affected States Parties, meetings for States Parties with key obligations to raise awareness on a particular topic, bilateral meetings with States not party to encourage accession. While not part of the official programme of the Intersessional Meetings, these meetings have helped support implementation efforts. In this context, a day to hold bilateral meetings ahead of or following the Intersessional Meetings may benefit the States Parties implementation efforts and provide more space for the President and the Committees to meet with States Parties implementing obligations under the Convention. This is particularly important to take full advantage of the opportunity of the presence in Geneva of representative of mine action authorities;
- (d) The Intersessional Meetings continue to be important opportunities for mine affected States Parties to provide an update to States Parties on progress and challenges in implementation of the Convention, as well as for other States Parties and organizations to offer their viewpoints on the implementation of the Convention;
- (e) The Intersessional Meetings continue to be an important opportunity for States not party to provide updates concerning their efforts towards accession to the Convention or closer alignment with the humanitarian aims of the Convention;
- (f) The Intersessional Meetings demonstrated again their critical nature in support of the objectives of the States Parties as well as an important opportunity to hold informal discussion in the lead up to the formal meetings of the States Parties at the end of the year. The Intersessional Meetings also provide a key opportunity for informal discussions on the margin of the meeting including through side events and the hosting of Individualised Approach meetings.

III. The Convention's Machinery

13. Since the Fourth Review Conference, the States Parties' implementation machinery has consisted of the following:

- (a) Committee on Article 5 Implementation;
- (b) Committee on Victim Assistance;
- (c) Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance;
- (d) Committee on Cooperative Compliance;
- (e) Coordinating Committee;
- (f) President.

14. The purpose, mandates, memberships and working methods of these Committees and the President were agreed to at the Third Review Conference¹ and were expanded on at the Fourth Review Conference² as follows.

15. The Fourth Review Conference decided to:

- (a) Ensure that the machinery should continue fostering and promoting dialogue with affected States Parties in the implementation of the respective mandates of the President and the Committees;

¹ APLC/CONF/2014/CRP.1

² APLC/CONF/2019/PM.2/WP.6

- (b) Amend the mandate of the President to a) include the topic of UN assessed contributions in order to ensure the matter can enjoy the highest-level attention and b) to mandate one or more members of the Coordinating Committee to support any other issue within his/her mandate where more attention or support may be needed, including on financial matters;
- (c) Amended the mandate of all Committees to take into account gender and diversity issues in their work, including in the presentations of their observations and conclusions, including by a) ensuring that gender and diversity is mainstreamed in the Committee's work which will be the responsibility of the Chair of each Committee and b) assign one of its members to serve as a focal point for gender and diversity to provide advice on the fulfilment of the gender mainstreaming objectives of the Oslo Action Plan and support the Chair in ensuring that the Committee includes gender and diversity in its work and exchanges of information with States Parties within the Committee's area of responsibility;
- (d) Expand the mandate of the Committee on Cooperative Compliance to address a) all matters under Article 1 and the implementation of Article 9 of the Convention in the spirit of cooperation to facilitate compliance in a supportive and amicable manner, b) encourage States Parties to submit annual Article 7 reports;
- (e) Increase and strengthening coordination including by examining implementation by States Parties in more holistic manner by submitting joint conclusions on the status of implementation of the Convention by States Parties at Meetings of the States Parties/Review Conferences.

16. Currently, each Committee comprises four members except for the Committee on Cooperative Compliance which includes four members and the President. The Coordinating Committee comprises all the members of the Committees, the President and the President-Designate. The Sponsorship Coordinator, the ICBL, ICRC, GICHD and UNODA participate in the Coordinating Committee as observers. The Coordinating Committee thus consists of 18 members, one observer State and four observer organisations.

17. Regarding the Convention's machinery:

- (a) The amendments to the mandates of the Committees at the Fourth Review Conference have served the Convention well bringing an increased focus on important matters such as assessed contributions, transparency reporting, national implementation measures and matters related to gender and diversity;
- (b) The amendments to the mandates have also strengthened the interaction between States Parties implementing the Convention and the Convention's machinery;
- (c) The President's mandate to propose a set of new officeholders for agreement by Meetings of States Parties/Review Conferences that is balanced regionally as well as between States Parties in the process of implementing key obligations of the Convention, those in a position to provide financial or other assistance, and other States Parties, has continued to ensure that the Coordinating Committee is representative and diverse;
- (d) Since the Fourth Review Conference each Committee has designated a gender and diversity focal point which has ensured the Committee's work and the interaction with States Parties takes into account matters related to gender and diversity;
- (e) Since the Fourth Review Conference, the President and Convention's Committees have strengthened their collaboration and synergies including by jointly encouraging States Parties to submit their required transparency reports, through written communication and online Article 7 workshops, and provided feedback on information submitted by States Parties on implementation;
- (f) Each year the President and the Committees have submitted preliminary observations to the Intersessional Meetings and conclusions to the Meetings of the States Parties on implementation of the Convention and Oslo Action Plan.

These observations and conclusions highlight the status of implementation of the Convention and have become an important part of the interaction of the President and the Committees with mine affected States Parties;

- (g) The President and the Committees have strengthened their coordination and engagement with mine affected States Parties, including by holding joint bilateral meetings with relevant State Parties. The Committee on Article 5 Implementation, in reviewing the Article 5 extension request process, recommended to the Twenty-First Meeting of the States Parties to further explore establishing a more formalized and recurrent dialogue between the Committee on Article 5 Implementation and the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance in relation to extension requests;
- (h) Following the increased focus on universalization of the Convention, including through the establishment of a Universalization Coordination Group, the President of the Twenty-First Meeting of the States Parties expressed the importance of stepping up efforts on universalization.
- (i) Overall, the machinery established by the Third Review Conference and expanded upon by the Fourth Review Conference has served the Convention well and continues to improve its working methods. Together with the observers, the members of the Coordinating Committee are well placed to carry out their mandate and address any matter that may affect implementation of the Convention.
