Introduction

Good Morning Excellencies and Delegates and welcome to the session on national reporting.

National reporting plays an important role in creating greater transparency, building confidence that High Contracting Parties are fulfilling their obligations under Protocol V and bringing about a culture of implementation.

I am delighted to have this opportunity to build on the work of my predecessors in this role and to work with all delegations to improve both the quantity and quality of national reporting.

Last year at the Sixth Conference it was agreed to:

(a) All High Contracting Parties and observer States are encouraged to submit national reports;

(b) High Contracting Parties are encouraged to use the Guide to National Reporting, which was adopted by the Fourth Conference;

(c) The Meeting of Experts in 2013 to continue its examination of the reporting forms and the Guide to National Reporting and in particular to examine the potential overlap between Forms E and F; and

(d) The Coordinator on National Reporting with the assistance of the CCW Implementation Support Unit to consider how to encourage High Contracting Parties to report on their obligations relating them clearly as required with the national reporting form.

Increasing the rate of national annual reports

Two of the recommendations are aimed at encouraging more High Contracting Parties to submit national annual reports. In the graph on the screen, you will see that the number of national annual reports submitted each year is slowly increasing. This year I would like to congratulate Albania, Chile and Cuba for submitting their first national annual reports.

The deadline for submitting national annual reports was 31 March. However, it is not too late to submit national reports and the CCW Implementation Support Unit will accept them at any time.

In terms of encouraging more High Contracting Parties to submit national reports, I would like to thank the President-designate, Ambassador Jan Knutsson, for his letter reminding all States to submit national annual reports, which was sent on 25 January 2013. Ambassador Knutsson reminded States of the new reporting template on victim assistance and I strongly encourage States to utilise that template.
In addition, the CCW Implementation Support Unit prepared a short paper on national reporting. The purpose of the paper is to provide further guidance to States on national reporting. I would like to ask Hine-Wai Loose to briefly speak to that paper.

[Hine-Wai Loose to speak]

During this week I have been speaking directly to delegations which have not yet submitted national reports and I will continue to do so. I fully recognise that for some States reporting is a considerable burden and takes time and resources. Simply put, submitting national annual reports is not a beauty competition. Whatever information States are able to provide, even if this is incomplete in places, will be most appreciated. While stating that a particular obligation has been implemented is one step forward, providing information on how a particular obligation has been implemented and whether this has been backed up by legislation is important for gaining a sense of how far States have progressed in their implementation of the Protocol’s obligations. Also, information concerning the challenges or difficulties States face in implementing a particular obligation is valuable for understanding where States may require assistance or where the CCW Implementation Support Unit should be focusing its efforts.

Does any delegation wish to take the floor at this stage?

[The floor to be given to delegations wishing to speak.]

Overlap between Forms E and F

This year we have been mandated to discuss the potential overlap between Forms E and F. We have circulated copies of Forms E and F and more are available at the back of the room.

Form E addresses reporting on the implementation of Article 7 and specifically the issue of existing ERW. Article 7 sets out the right of High Contracting Parties to seek and receive assistance to deal with existing ERW and that each High Contracting Party in a position to do shall provide assistance. Form E provides an opportunity for States affected by existing ERW to set out their needs and challenges in dealing with this problem. In addition, donor States have the opportunity to detail the assistance they are providing specifically on existing ERW.

Form F is where States can set out the range of cooperation and assistance activities listed in Article 8 that they support. Again, affected States can provide information on their challenges and needs for assistance.

From the 50 national annual reports submitted last year:

- In eleven of the reports there was duplication between Forms E and F. In other words either part or all of the same information was provided in both Forms E and F.
- Four developed High Contracting Parties stated they did not seek assistance for dealing with existing ERW.
- Six High Contracting Parties stated that they were affected by ERW and three of those made it clear that they needed assistance.
• Fourteen High Contracting Parties did not provide any information in Form E or simply stated that it was “not applicable”.

In terms of the overlap in reporting between Forms E and F, it may be the case that a number of States simply do not discriminate between providing assistance for either existing ERW or assistance provided under Article 8. This point was made by one State which stated in Form E that it treated “the provision for assistance for existing ERW in exactly the same manner as it does the provision of assistance under the terms of Article 8.”

While the distinction between existing ERW and future ERW is important under Protocol V, is it really necessary to make this distinction for reporting purposes?

Would it be possible to merge Forms E and F? In such a merged form, High Contracting Parties could make it clear whether they are affected by existing ERW. Donor States could state if they have specific projects to deal with existing ERW.

Merging the two forms would mean that all requests for assistance and all support for cooperation and assistance were provided in only one form. This in turn would make the information easier to collate and assess. It would cause less confusion for States concerning what information they should provide under Forms E and F. And an additional bonus is that it would reduce the number of forms within the reporting template from nine to eight.