

President's opening of the ISU debate

Thank you, chair.

At the 3MSP the Presidency was mandated by the States parties to continue the consultations on the establishment and funding model of an ISU, on the basis of the decisions made at 2MSP in Beirut in 2011 and the consultations conducted by the Lebanese Presidency. In addition, we were mandated to negotiate a hosting agreement with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD).

The Presidency has since then worked to fulfil our mandate, and will continue to do so. In addition to preparing a discussion paper outlining a potential model and estimated core budget of an ISU, we have held one open-ended round of consultations co-chaired by Costa Rica, Zambia and myself. We have furthermore had numerous discussions in the Coordination Committee and been in dialogue on the matter with a number of States Parties, all the time trying to identify the remaining issues and how to solve them. We have also had one meeting with the GICHD on the hosting of a CCM ISU at the Centre, and we are in the process of drafting an agreement between the States Parties and the Centre for this purpose.

The work of the Presidency has all the time been greatly enhanced and complemented by the cooperation with chairs of this session, Costa Rica and Zambia as Coordinators on General Status and Operation, and I also wish to again thank Lebanon for the substantive amount of work and engagement they put into this issue during the last year. Lebanon continues to provide important guidance and support to our work on the ISU.

I now wish to draw the attention to the background paper prepared by the Interim ISU that was circulated in the room yesterday, outlining the establishment and financing models of the existing ISUs, and lessons we have learned. As the paper shows, there are different ways to do this, and financing models using the UN scale of assessment have been agreed upon twice before in the recent past, for the BWC and CCW ISUs. It is somewhat difficult to explain that there are fundamental differences between these conventions and the CCM regarding the legal aspects of establishing an ISU.

Moreover, the paper illustrates that the last budget estimate provided in the Presidential Discussion Paper presented in February is a rather cost-effective option compared to the established ISUs, as we have taken the current financial situation of States Parties into account. Much has been done to reduce the cost estimates and adopt a realistic level of ambition. It is difficult to envisage how the core budget of the ISU can be cut further without violating the decisions made in Beirut at the 2MSP, to establish an ISU that is functional and independent and in accordance with the ISU Directive.

Yesterday, we circulated a possible draft decision on the establishment and financing of an ISU. This document is based on the consultations and informal discussions we have had over the last months.

This document is an attempt to take the concerns and considerations of the States Parties seriously. And we have to recognise that there is a large, rather overwhelming, crossregional majority supporting the establishment of an ISU that is owned by all States Parties and that therefore all States Parties should pay their share.