



Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Intersessional Meeting
Geneva, 8-9 June 2017

Statement by Ms. Palma D'Ambrosio, Deputy-Permanent Representative
Delegation of Italy to the Conference on Disarmament

International Cooperation and Assistance

Madam Chair,

First of all, I would like to join other delegations in expressing our appreciation for the work conducted by the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance, and for the preliminary observations you have circulated to feed into our discussions.

Italy fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union. I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

Madam Chair,

This year we celebrate the 20th anniversary since the adoption of the Ottawa Convention, but the legitimate sense of fulfilment deriving from the important results we have collectively achieved should not overshadow the challenges we still need to face.

To overcome them, enhanced international cooperation and assistance is essential and Italy is ready to take on this commitment in full.

For this reason, in 2011 we established a Fund specifically designated to support mine action activities. Since the creation of this Fund, we have allocated almost 50 million EUR to integrated mine action programmes; countries in which we have implemented such activities include Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Colombia, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Palestine, Somalia and Sudan.

Throughout the years, we have provided extensive support not only towards the immediate goals of clearance and stockpile destruction, but also to the longer-term objectives of assisting victims, as well as of raising awareness of the risks associated with any ERW.

We are convinced that cooperation and assistance does not only relate to financial support, but also to the sharing of expertise, technical know-how and experience. In this regard, I would like to highlight the extensive clearance of explosive remnants of war conducted by the Italian Armed Forces operating abroad, notably in Afghanistan and Lebanon.

Allocation of resources for 2017 is currently being finalized. Pending the approval by Parliament of the Law on Italy's participation to peace and security initiatives, we are not yet in

a position to provide exact figures. However, we firmly expect that the overall amount of available funds for the current year will be at the same level as in 2016.

Cooperation with long-standing partners, such as UNMAS, the ICRC, and the Italian Section of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines will be confirmed, as well as traditional geographic and thematic areas of intervention.

Italy has also been a long-standing supporter of the Implementation Support Unit of the APMBC, whose role has been central in assisting States Parties with implementing the Convention's provisions and in promoting universalization. In 2017, our financial support to the ISU will continue unchanged.

As Chair of the Mine Action Support Group, we are engaged with our partners in efforts aimed at making financial allocations to mine action more efficient and effective, including by enhancing coordination and information exchange among donors.

With the same goal of increasing effectiveness of International Cooperation, we welcome the individualized approach as adopted by the 15th MSP last December. We think that its implementation could be useful in advancing the fulfillment of the Convention's goals and we would like to thank you for all your efforts in this regard.

Before concluding, Madam Chair,

allow me to highlight a crosscutting issue that should receive proper attention also in the framework of the activities of the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance. Italy is well aware of the importance of including a gender perspective in mine action activities, with the broader aim of ensuring that all diversity aspects are taken into account in mine action interventions and that affected women, girls, boys and men benefit on an equal basis from mine action activities.

To this aim, we have established in 2016 a partnership with the "Gender in Mine Action Programme" (GMAP) aimed at producing a practical guidance on gender and age-sensitive victim assistance for operators in the sector. We look forward to sharing with the membership the outcome of this initiative later this year.

Thank you, Madam Chair