

Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
Intersessional meetings
Geneva, 8-9 June 2017
EU statement on Universalisation

Mr. President,

1. We would like to thank you for your active engagement to promote the universalisation of the Convention.
2. For the European Union and its Member States, promoting universalisation and effective implementation of the Ottawa Convention is one of the top priorities in the area of human security and disarmament. At this 20th anniversary year, we would like to reiterate our full support to the objectives of the Convention and to the implementation of the Maputo Action Plan in order to fulfil the aspiration to achieve an anti-personnel mine free world by 2025.
3. The longstanding financial and political support by the EU and its Member States in mine action has significantly contributed to reaching our common objective towards a more universal adherence to the Convention. A large part of the EU's assistance programme in support of the Convention is dedicated to its Universalisation. It is in this context that the EU High Level Task Force, notably Her Royal Highness Princess Astrid of Belgium and His Royal Highness Prince Mired of Jordan, as EU Envoys, engaged with important international partners and brought positive results.
4. In the framework of the new EU Council Decision in support of the Ottawa Convention to be adopted soon, the EU will continue to advocate the universalisation of the Convention. We will support the Presidencies of the Convention and a High Level Task Force from eminent personalities to engage at a high level with States not yet parties. We will also provide support to a study to broaden our knowledge of the reasons and barriers which might impede States to accede to the Convention, in line with our preparations for the Fourth Review Conference in 2019.
5. While continuing our overall efforts towards universalisation, we believe that progress can be also made by embracing, as a first step, the norms of the Convention and implementing effectively concrete measures to that end. We invite all States non-party to this Convention to work with us to reach our aspiration to achieve an anti-personnel mine free world by 2025.

Thank you, Mr President

5. National ownership is a key prerequisite for effective mine action. A comprehensive, up-to-date and broadly supported national mine action plan, developed by the government of a mine-affected country in dialogue with donors, civil society and implementing agencies will help coordinate mine action efforts and maximise the impact of our actions. But national ownership takes a lot of know-how and capacity and also here donors can play an important supporting role. Particularly on this topic the EU sponsored a regional seminar in March in Bangkok. The seminar discussed the "country coalition concept" that puts forward a model where an affected country partners with a donor country in order to approach other donors and operators.
6. Funding shortfalls also call for further cooperation in order to use the available resources in a most effective and result-oriented way. We can learn from best practices, such as the 'holistic' model conceived and supported by the EU Delegation in Baghdad in close coordination with the Iraqi authorities, the international Coalition, UNDP and UNMAS. This model, referred to as the 'blended solution', concentrates on the orchestration of efforts of military, commercial, national and international mine action operators which has multiplied their overall humanitarian impact in Iraq contributing significantly across a full spectrum of related activity towards the safe and dignified return of citizens.
7. The EU will continue to cooperate with and, where possible, extend assistance to those States Parties that most need support in meeting their commitments under the Convention, and to affected non-States Parties. We will continue coordination with other donors and cooperate closely with the countries concerned in support of their national mine action plans.

Thank you, Madam Chair