



European Union

EU Statement on Mine Clearance (Article 5)

Intersessional meetings

Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention

Geneva, 7-8 June 2018

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Albania* and the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina align themselves with this statement.

The European Union would like to thank the Committee for its conclusions with regard to the implementation of Article 5 and the mine clearance related actions of the Maputo Action Plan.

We congratulate all those States who have already completed their clearance obligations and become mine free. This should serve as an encouragement and inspiration for other mine affected States and bring us closer towards the fulfilment of our shared aspiration for a mine free world by 2025.

The EU remains committed to supporting mine clearance activities to help mine affected States Parties to meet their Article 5 obligations under the Convention. More than two thirds of the almost €300 million EU funding for mine action from 2012-2016 was earmarked for mine clearance.

An important part of the EU Council Decision adopted in August 2017, in support of the implementation of the Ottawa Convention, is dedicated to assisting mine affected States Parties to meet their mine clearance obligations. This EU support will enable the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) to provide assistance to up to five States Parties that have upcoming mine clearance deadlines. The Committee on Article 5 Implementation is involved in the selection of the beneficiary States Parties. The project will support affected

* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

States Parties to strengthen their national planning and improve coordination among donors. It will provide funding to the organisation of national stakeholder dialogues, facilitated by the ISU, in close collaboration with the relevant governments and other actors, including representatives from mine affected populations, mine action donors, mine clearance organisations, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), UN agencies and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD). Gender and diversity aspects of mine clearance will be taken into account.

The EU believes that it is important for mine affected States Parties, which are not able to fulfil their mine clearance obligations under Article 5, to indicate and submit in a timely manner a request for extension of their mine clearance deadlines, in accordance with the established process

We welcome the planned visit to Ukraine by the Committee on Article 5 implementation and look forward to further cooperation of Ukraine with the Committee in order to enable the long-delayed submission of the extension request of Ukraine's mine clearance deadline, which has unfortunately resulted in a situation of non-compliance under Article 5. We fully recognise the difficult challenges Ukraine faces in the implementation of its Article 5 obligations, due to the fact that some parts of its national territory have been out of effective control of the Ukrainian authorities since the violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity by the Russian Federation in 2014. Notwithstanding these circumstances and recent developments, we expect Ukraine to urgently submit a formal extension request of its mine clearance deadline, given its expiry on 1 June 2016.