



# PHILIPPINES

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As of 1300H/22 June 2021

**Intersessional Meeting (ISM) of the  
Anti-Personnel Land Mine Convention  
22-24 June 2021  
Thematic Session 1: Mandate of the President**

Mr. President-designate,

The Philippines is pleased to see you at the helm of the APMBC process and assures you of our full support in your stewardship of this Convention leading to the 19<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties in November.

We are fully committed to the Convention's aims and principles, and to the implementation of the Oslo Action Plan.

We appreciate your work towards the formal universalization of the Convention, and we believe that much more work needs to be done to universalize the Convention's norms.

Our overarching vision is to create a world free of all mines by 2025. This vision requires the full and effective implementation not only of the letter of the Convention, but also its spirit. The aims of the Convention go beyond its specific provisions.

In the Philippines, the terrorist New People's Army (NPA) has continued to use mines without remorse, leading to the senseless deaths of many civilians. Recent incidents have again attested to their use of mines of an improvised nature that are triggered upon contact by their victims. They offer no apologies for this, claiming that the use of mines is a legitimate form of violence.

It is regrettable that these terrorists claim exception from the Convention's provisions by stating that the Convention is binding only upon States, and that the Convention's definition of anti-personnel mines exempt them from accountability for the use of improvised explosive devices functioning as mines.

Mr. President,

There is no lack of clarity on our mission; no amount of semantic obfuscation should distract us from it: you have affirmed several times this morning our driving goal to save lives and safeguard communities that continue to be threatened by all kinds of mines.

The Philippine experience demonstrates that while States work in good faith towards the realization of the principles of International Humanitarian Law, armed non-State actors wantonly discard such principles; threaten people's lives, livelihood, and safety; and obstruct all efforts to achieve conditions supporting the Sustainable Development Goals.

Our experience convinces us that technical gaps in the letter of the Convention must be addressed, to leave - not even the slightest doubt - on our collective will to realize a world free of all mines.

Mr. President,

Our efforts to universalization of the Convention should go beyond encouraging States Not Parties to accede. States Parties, under your direction, must also reaffirm global norms against the use of mines by any actor at any time and in any circumstances.

The Philippines calls on you to lead the way by condemning the use of all mines, including those of an improvised nature, by all armed non-state actors, including terrorist groups such as the New People's Army.

We call on all States Parties and civil society advocates to issue the same condemnation and to call on all actors to respect International Humanitarian Law.

Such condemnation and call are in line with Action 11 of the Oslo Action Plan, and the preambular provisions of the Convention itself.

We encourage you Mr. President to continue to energize our vision for achieving the letter and spirit of the Convention, and in this regard, to act decisively at every instance, to reinforce the normative framework, leaving no ambiguity, on the use of mines by armed non-state actors, including terrorist groups such as the New People's Army.

The Philippines stands ready to work with all parties in this regard.

On a final note, Mr. President, we convey our condolences on the killing of mine clearance personnel in Afghanistan and take this opportunity to pay tribute to them and our colleagues whose daily duties on the ground manifest our commitment to make the world safer from mines.

Thank you, Mr. President.