

## Opening remarks by Ambassador Stefano Toscano, GICHD Director Intersessional Meetings of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, 30 June 2020

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, dear Colleagues,

It is truly a great pleasure to take the floor during the opening of this year's intersessionals.

At the end of last year, in Oslo, States Parties committed to implementing an ambitious and measurable action plan which, when realized, would have a lasting impact on affected communities. We must now redouble our efforts to concretize this plan and strengthen the recipes for success. Strong national ownership, sound strategic planning and the application of the latest standards, methods and tools will continue to play a pivotal role in mine action.

Many processes have already been launched to achieve the objectives of the Oslo Action Plan. Some affected states have incorporated relevant actions of the plan into their Article 5 extension requests. Some Article 7 transparency reports have been submitted that include additional information that helps measure progress.

To ensure this positive momentum is sustained, States Parties must be afforded with the means easily to see progress measured against the specific indicators agreed in Oslo. The GICHD is currently working on this and stands ready to support States Parties in this endeavor. Notably, the use of the latest Information Management tools would allow States visually to represent the baseline articulated through their Article 7 reports.

Also, the GICHD would like to commend again States Parties for having included a new section dedicated to risk education in the Oslo Action Plan. By this, States Parties have strengthened their commitment to providing context-specific and targeted risk education to affected populations and groups at risk. I encourage States Parties to provide updates on the implementation of risk education measures and challenges during the next few days.

Dear colleagues,

We live in uncertain times, but that should not prevent us from doing everything possible to promote our noble cause. The next five years will be key to our work and we are fortunate to have before us a clear action plan to support our efforts.

This very meeting – under the current circumstances – is a strong signal of the resilience of our sector and the importance we all place in safeguarding and implementing the norms established by the Convention. Let me thank the Sudanese Presidency, the Coordinating Committee and the ISU for their commitment to make this meeting possible. That is no small achievement.

I wish you all fruitful discussions. Thank you.