



European Union

EU Statement on Mine Clearance (Article 5)

Intersessional meetings

Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention

Geneva, 22-24 May 2019

Madam Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. The Candidate Countries Turkey, North Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Serbia* and Albania*, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this statement.

The European Union would like to thank the Committee for its preliminary observations 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 anti-personnel mine free. This should serve as an encouragement and an inspiration for other mine affected States, and brings us closer towards the fulfilment of our shared aspiration for a world free of anti-personnel mines by 2025. We are encouraged by the efforts of Chile who announced at the last Meeting of States Parties that it hopes to finalise its Article 5 clearance obligations by its deadline on 1 March 2020, and hence it does not require submitting an extension request.

The EU remains committed to supporting mine clearance activities to help mine affected States Parties meet their Article 5 obligations under the Convention. More than 30 million EUR of EU assistance for mine action was earmarked for mine clearance in 2017. Mine clearance is very often accompanied by mine risk education in order to prevent new victims.

The EU is actively supporting the efforts of States Parties to fulfil their mine clearance commitments by means of a dedicated project, funded under the 2017 EU Council Decision and implemented by the Implementation Support Unit of the Convention. The project activities include support for States Parties to set up a national stakeholder dialogue on mine clearance with national and international stakeholders. Last year, such national stakeholder dialogues took place in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Senegal. The Convention's Committee on Article 5 is involved in the selection of the beneficiary States Parties.

* North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

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 by 31 March a request for extension of their mine clearance deadlines, in accordance with the established process. In this light, the EU notes that Eritrea has yet to submit an Article 5 extension request, which is due to be considered at the Fourth Review Conference. We encourage Eritrea to draw upon the resources of the Implementation Support Unit to develop its request and to submit it without delay.

Thank you, Madam Chair