



Foreign & Commonwealth Office

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION: INTERSESSIONAL MEETING

UK Statement under Agenda Item (3) on Matters related to the mandate of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation (b iv) All other States Parties with an obligation, on Wednesday 22 May 2019.

Please check against delivery.

1. The United Kingdom aligns itself with the statement of the European Union, and offers some comments in a national capacity.
2. The UK has made significant progress in clearing the Falkland Islands and thus towards meeting its Article 5 obligations. Since the inception of the UK's Demining Programme in 2009, over 9,000 anti-personnel mines have been destroyed and over 32 million square metres of land released.
3. In the last year (1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019), the current, fifth, phase of mine clearance has destroyed 254 anti-personnel mines, 101 items of unexploded ordnance and released over 6 million (6,750,059) square metres of land.
4. In March 2019, the Programme released a further three mined areas, not yet included in the statistics, and commenced clearance at an additional six sites, to be completed by 31 March 2020. Most significantly, the Programme completed Technical Survey for nine sites at Yorke Bay, which was necessary preparation to allow us to contract their clearance.

Mr President,

5. The UK is strongly committed to meeting its Article 5 deadline of 1 March 2024. The overwhelming majority of clearance activity is already funded and contracted, and Phase 5 is on schedule to complete by 31 March 2020 - notwithstanding the risks posed to all mine clearance efforts in the Falkland Islands, such as poor weather.
6. In order to comply with our Article 5 obligations, the UK's remaining priorities are firstly, the smooth completion of the remaining Phase 5 tasks, and secondly, to clear the remaining sites at Yorke Bay, which pose the greatest challenge and risks. Technical survey has been completed, but clearance will be complex due to the challenges of the sandy environment. Officials and contractors are working through the operational and commercial processes with the intention to contract the clearance in a timely manner. We will keep the Convention apprised of progress and projections, through the regular channels. We fully intend to implement our obligations within the UK's Article 5 deadline.