

(Draft) Statement by Mr Zoltán Nagy,  
representative of the Republic of Hungary  
to the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of State Parties of the Convention on  
the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-  
Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction

Mr President,

Since this is my first intervention during the 11<sup>th</sup> MSP Meeting, I would like to start by congratulating you on your election. Secondly, I would also like to thank our hosts, the Government of Cambodia, for the excellent organisation of the event and the generous hospitality.

Hungary welcomes the significant progress made in the last two years in mitigating the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel mines. Nevertheless, both the general statements and the requests for extension under Article 5 show that the outstanding humanitarian and developmental challenges are still enormous. The 11th MSP gives us an excellent opportunity to assert a strong and continuous commitment towards a world free of anti-personnel landmines, reduce the number of new APL victims, provide sustainable care for the victims of these weapons, and further strengthen close cooperation and coordination among all relevant actors.

Hungary was among the first countries that joined the Ottawa Convention. We ratified the Convention in April 1998, destroyed our entire stockpile by 1999, and have continued to fulfil our obligations deriving from the Convention in an open and transparent manner ever since. This is in this open and transparent spirit that I would like to share with you some information on recent developments related to the implementation of the provisions of the Convention.

On 7 September 2011 Hungary and Croatia, with financial support of the European Union, launched a joint project called „Rehabilitation of land mine contaminated sites in the Drava-Danube area”. The project is part of the *Hungary-Croatia Instrument for the Pre-Accession Assistance Cross-Border Cooperation Programme* of 2007-2013. The Programme aims at creating a sustainable environment and developing tourism between the two countries and provides technical assistance for that purpose.

The origins of the project go back to the early 1990s when, as a result of the armed conflict in the former Yugoslavia, notably the military activities in 1991, 1992 and 1995, large territories of Croatia, including areas near the state border of Croatia and Hungary, remained contaminated with mines. During the recent, and still ongoing de-mining works in Croatia, patches of land straddling the border of Hungary and Croatia were found suspected of having mines.

There are, unfortunately, no exact data or maps giving clear evidence that the near border areas on both sides are clear from mines or explosive remnants of war. Therefore, in order to convert these areas entirely safe and freely accessible for all and suitable for civilian purposes, the Hungarian and the Croatian authorities have taken steps to ensure that those areas are clear of mines.

In the framework of the said project, a sum of 3.5 M € was allocated to the Police of Baranya County (Hungary) and the Croatian Mine Action Centre (the main beneficiary of the project) to carry out the necessary works. The main elements of the project, beginning in September 2011 and to be implemented in the 24 month timeframe, are the following:

In the first year, the aim is to survey and mark mine suspected areas and establish a Mine Information Database. In the second year the aim is to clear all mine contaminated and mine suspected areas and carry out the environmental rehabilitation of the target area. (I distributed in writing a more detailed version of my statement, including on the methodology used.)

It is to be noted that parts of the project will be carried out in NATURA 2000 areas on both Hungarian and Croatian borderland. Therefore, it will be carried out with maximum care to protect the environment.

We believe that the realization of these works opens new perspectives for the cross border co-operation between Hungary and Croatia. The project will contribute to the security of the border regions, creating a safer environment for the local population.

Mr President,

Although the Convention does not contain provisions for handling such cases, i.e. reporting on mine clearance activities for which the need occurs years after the expiry of the 10-year timeframe set for mine clearance, Hungary is committed to ensure full openness transparency of this project.

It is our intention to reflect relevant developments in our next annual report on the implementation of the Convention. We will also give regular updates on the progress of the demining project to the States Parties, including at upcoming meetings of the State Parties of the Convention. We are also ready to provide details to any interested parties, including representatives of the civil society. We hope that with the rigorous and transparent implementation of the project Hungary will be able to demonstrate its good-will and commitment to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and help maintain its vitality.

Thank you.