



European Union
Statement by

**H.E. Mrs Mariangela Zappia, Head of the Permanent Delegation of the
European Union to the United Nations**

APMBC - 13th Meeting of the States Parties

(Geneva, 2-5 December 2013)

EU general statement

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- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -

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Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The following countries align themselves with this declaration: Turkey^{*}, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia[†], Montenegro[†], Iceland[‡], Serbia[†], Albania[†], Bosnia and Herzegovina[†], Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova.

Let us first congratulate you on your election as President of our meeting and pledge our full support in your work. We also take this opportunity to thank the outgoing President Ambassador Matjaz Kovacic, of Slovenia for his leadership during the past year.

Mr President,

The 13th Meeting of States Parties is of special significance. This is the last opportunity for a collective assessment of our common efforts and the remaining challenges for the implementation of the Cartagena Action Plan 2010-2014 prior to the Convention's Third Review Conference to be held in Maputo, Mozambique in June, 2014.

We very much welcome Algeria at the chair and express the hope that it will raise awareness in North Africa and the Middle East about the importance of the Ottawa Convention and promote universalisation in an important target region.

We are proud that with the accession of Poland on 1 June 2013, all 28 Member States of the European Union are now States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Convention. We will continue to comply with our obligations under the Convention and provide leadership and resources to clear mined areas, destroy stockpiles and provide assistance to land-mine survivors.

Mr. President,

The European Union is very much looking forward to the Third Review Conference and will engage constructively in the preparation of the Maputo Action Plan. We will present some ideas at the preparatory meeting to be held at the end of this week. We are grateful to the President of the Review Conference for the documents circulated earlier last week as a basis for our common reflection in preparation for the meeting. We believe that 16 years after the adoption of the Convention it is necessary to agree on concrete plans and commitments to ensure further progress in the next phase of the implementation of the Convention's provisions and objectives.

^{*} Candidate country

[†] The Candidate countries former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia as well as potential candidate countries Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

[‡] Candidate Country Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.

We are particularly interested in moving ahead to effectively address post-demining challenges, ensure long term support to victim assistance, promote further universalisation and donor coordination, as well as exploring potentials for further complementarity with other instruments, as applicable. The European Union will continue to work in close cooperation with the countries concerned and provide, where possible, assistance to address the significant remaining challenges.

We are pleased to see that substantial progress has been made in the fight against the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel mines in recent years but this is not enough. The goal of universalization is also at a crucial stage: the Ottawa community now counts 161 members but we need more to reach our shared goal of a world free of anti-personnel mines. We urge those States not yet Party to the Ottawa Convention to consider ratifying or acceding to it in the near future.

The European Union projects in support of the implementation of the Cartagena Action Plan, implemented by the Convention's ISU, are continuing in full swing to bear results in the run up to the Third Review Conference. Through those projects, the EU seeks to promote the universalisation of the Convention, supports efforts to implement the victim assistance and mine clearance aspects of the Cartagena Action Plan and demonstrates its on-going commitment to the Convention. We will elaborate more on our specific projects under the specific agenda items. An update on those projects will also be presented at a side event hosted by the EU and the ISU, tomorrow 3 December at 13.00 in Room XXV.

Mr. President,

The European Union is extremely concerned over the use of anti-personnel landmines in Syria. We call on Syria to accede to the Convention as soon as possible and, in the meantime, to respect the norms established by it. We are also concerned by the reported use of anti-personnel landmines in several States Parties of the Convention. If confirmed, these uses would constitute the most alarming breach of the obligations under the Convention and represent a major setback to our fight against the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel land mines. It is the responsibility of States Parties to bring full clarity on possible use of antipersonnel landmines: therefore, we expect all concerned to conduct an investigation and to report back on their findings at the earliest opportunity. The EU reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the full implementation of the Ottawa Convention.

Thank you.