

**13th Meeting of States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
Geneva, 2-5 December 2013**

Statement by Norway on Article 5

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Thank you, Mr. President,

Let me first take this opportunity to congratulate Bhutan and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela for having declared compliance with Article 5.1 since 12MSP. Clearing mined areas is a core obligation for States Parties, and an essential step towards a mine free world. We also welcome the news from Hungary that they have finalised the clearance of the newly found mined areas on their border, and commend Germany for their thorough effort to investigate suspected mined areas on their territory.

While we recognise that much valuable work has been done in the past year, we are concerned that several States Parties continue to make only limited progress towards meeting their clearance obligations, and as a result, that they may not meet their Article 5 deadlines. We are particularly concerned that some States Parties, who have been granted extensions to their original deadlines, are significantly behind even on their revised schedules.

Such delays are, in some cases, due to causes beyond the control of individual States Parties. It is, however, fair to say – as the Third Review Conference to this Convention draws nearer – that some of these delays could have been avoided if the States Parties had wanted to.

We know that a significant amount of resources have been and is being wasted because insufficient attention has been given to conducting appropriate surveys, precisely locating the actual minefields. We also know that some States Parties have been slow to commence survey and clearance activities, thus making it hard for themselves to meet their deadlines. In some instances, consistent reluctance to address the actual mined areas for many years may emerge into a situation of non-compliance, and states may need to act accordingly.

A renewed effort to implement the obligations contained in Article 5 is urgently needed. Founded on a spirit of cooperation and engagement, this Convention draws its status from one essential expectation shared by all the States Parties, namely that everyone will do their utmost to meet their obligations in a timely manner.

Norway will continue to comply with its Article 6 obligations, and support mine clearance activities in affected states in the years ahead. But Norwegian support for specific projects will require national ownership, in terms of leadership and a demonstrated willingness to solve the problem in a rational manner, including by making use of available international competence, by organising the work in the most efficient manner, and by committing national resources.

Ultimately, that requires political will, not at least among the States Parties responsible for clearing mined areas on their own territories. Unless that is forthcoming, it is difficult to see how the current trend can be reversed, and frankly, how international funding for mine clearance will be sustained.

Thank you.