

**15<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, Vienna, 18 – 21 December 2017.**

**Statement by Norway on Implementation of Article 5.**

Thank you, Mr. President.

We thank the Committee on Article 5 Implementation for the conclusions and recommendations presented.

As we celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and what has been achieved since then, we should make maximum use of the lessons learned over the last two decades.

With far more experience, new technology and vastly improved methodologies available to the mine action sector today than when the Convention came into being, all mine-affected countries should be able to complete mine clearance within a reasonable period of time. We welcome Algeria as the 28th mine free country, and urge all other affected state parties to increase efforts towards article 5 completion.

At a time when pressure on donor budgets is increasing, the mobilization of financial support for demining will depend on making the most effective use of available resources - and on showing results.

This requires targeting funding on **evidence based survey** and clearance. We can no longer afford to waste resources on costly and time-intensive clearance of areas where there is no evidence of contamination.

Norway is proud to fund the work of Mine Action Review, and its annual “Clearing the Mines” report which is presented to this meeting by the three largest demining operators jointly. We urge all stakeholders to make use of this publication, as a tool to help identify remaining challenges and where efforts need to be targeted to ensure progress.

Sadly, over the last few years we have seen an increase in the use of improvised landmines, by non-state armed groups, in the Middle East and elsewhere, resulting in an increasing number of civilian casualties. Victim-activated improvised landmines fall under the provisions of the Mine Ban Treaty. Addressing the large-scale contamination from improvised mines and the suffering they cause will require a coordinated humanitarian effort and dedicated resources from the international community. It will also require that international Mine Action Standards are updated to include new challenges. If we approach improvised explosive devices as a separate category of weapons requiring their own guidelines for detection and destruction and reporting, we risk undermining this Convention. This has been and continues to be our concern with the efforts currently undertaken by UNMAS to produce new IEDD standards.

Where extensions to Article 5 deadlines are required, we expect to see detailed extension requests, based on a realistic understanding of remaining contamination, and with concrete steps and milestones for how to address mined areas in the most effective means possible.

Fulfilling article 5 obligations and reaching the goal of a mine free world by 2025 require that mine-affected countries have the political will to make it a national priority.

Reaching this goal will also require that international funding for mine clearance continues to be forthcoming. Norway contributes USD 37 million this year to mine clearance in 20 countries. We will continue to fulfill our Article 6 obligation to assist in the implementation of the Convention, including through support for survey activities and mine clearance in affected States. We will continue to give priority to countries that demonstrate strong national ownership and clear progress towards completion.

Thank you.