

Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC)

17th Meeting of States Parties

Geneva, 26-30 November 2018

Statement by India

Madam President,

The delegation of India is very pleased to see you chair the 17th MSP of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. We appreciate the leading role being played by Afghanistan on this subject of immense humanitarian importance. We note that the annual resolution on the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, sponsored by Afghanistan in its capacity as Chair this year, was adopted without a single vote cast against, thereby demonstrating the importance the international community attaches to this important subject. We also welcome the adoption, by consensus, of the resolution on 'Countering the threat posed by IEDs' sponsored by Afghanistan, along with France and Colombia, at the First Committee this year.

For its part, Madam President, India supports the vision of a world free of anti-personnel mines. Our presence as an Observer in this meeting, and at other MSPs and Review Conferences since 2004 is a demonstration of our support towards this goal. We believe that the availability of militarily effective alternative technologies that can perform, cost-effectively, the legitimate defensive role of anti-personnel mines will considerably facilitate the goal of their complete elimination.

India is party to AP II of the CCW which takes into account the legitimate defence requirements of States, especially those with long borders. India has fulfilled its obligations under AP-II, including ceasing the production of non-detectable mines as well as rendering all our anti-personnel mines detectable. India is also observing a moratorium on the export and transfer of anti-personnel mines.

Madam President, in collaboration with the ICRC, India hosted an International Conference on the CCW in New Delhi in December 2017. The Conference drew more than 83 participants from 24 States covering Asia, the Gulf region and East Africa, as well as experts from international organizations. A range of legal, military and humanitarian perspectives were deliberated at the Conference, including the impact of Anti-Personnel Mines, Explosive Remnants of War, Improvised Explosive Vehicles and Anti-Vehicle Mines.

This year, India participated in the Expert Meetings on Humanitarian Mine Action conducted under the aegis of ADMM Plus in Lao PDR and Russia. In addition, we participated in Counter IED Subject Matter Exchange programmes on a bilateral basis.

Madam President, we have taken a number of measures to address the humanitarian concerns arising from the use of anti-personnel mines. Increasing public awareness is an integral part of our efforts to avoid civilian casualties. India's ratification of the Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities underscores the importance we attach to victim assistance. The "Jaipur foot" prosthetic has become symbolic of India's contribution to victim assistance, with more than 60 limb-fitment camps having been undertaken in 27 countries across the world over recent years.

A 40-day Artificial Limb Fitment Camp is being organised by India in Al Kafeel Hospital in Kasbala, Iraq. The camp which has started on 24 November, 2018, aims to provide at least 500 Artificial Limbs to the needy victims in Iraq.

India has extended assistance to international demining and rehabilitation efforts, including as part of UN peacekeeping operations to which it is a leading contributor. Indian mine clearance professionals have contributed to both clearance and clearance training globally, including in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Angola, Benin, Sri Lanka and Afghanistan. In the last five years, more than 500 personnel from various countries have undergone training in India in mine clearance and explosives disposal. India remains committed to increased international cooperation and assistance for mine clearance and is willing to extend technical assistance and expertise to this end.

Thank you, Madam President.
