



Statement by Turkey

FIRST INTERNATIONAL PLEDGING CONFERENCE ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION 2 MARCH 2016

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Thank you Madam President,

Let me at the outset add my voice to the other speakers in thanking you for convening this first ever Pledging Conference today. I also would like to thank the former Presidency of Belgium for their outstanding work.

Madam President,

Turkey strongly supports efforts for a world free of landmines. In that regard Turkey became a State Party to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction in 2004. Our common aim is to put an end to the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel mines that kill or maim, mostly innocent and defenceless civilians and especially children.

Turkish National Mine Action Centre has begun to work on national mine clearance standards and mine action information management system while managing Eastern Border Mine Clearance Project together with UNDP.

The Project is a European Union IPA Project. It aims to clear approximately 16 million m² area contaminated with around 222.000 mines in two phases.

The contracting process for Phase 1 has been completed as of 18 December 2015, and the process for Phase 2 is still ongoing. Demining activities in the field is slated to start in April 2016. The Project is planned to be completed by December 2017.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to reiterate that my country is determined to fulfil its commitments emanating from the Ottawa Convention.

Madam President,

Without further due, let me announce that in response to your and distinguished Permanent Representative of Australia's call to support the Sponsorship Program, we will be providing 4.000 US Dollars. Our voluntary financial contributions to the functioning of this forum has been humble yet consistent over the years. In this vain, Turkey intends to support the ISU budget with further 4.000 US Dollars, which is still in the due approval process.

Thank you Madam President.