



**Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
4th Pledging Conference
Geneva, 26 February 2019**

**Statement by Ambassador Gianfranco Incarnato
Permanent Representative of Italy to the Conference on Disarmament**

Mister President,

At the outset, I would like to warmly congratulate you on assuming the Presidency of the Anti-Personnel Landmine Convention, and to commend you for organizing this Pledging Conference.

Twenty-two years ago, the adoption of the APMBC marked a historic step in addressing the serious humanitarian impacts of conventional weapons. In the 20th anniversary of the entry into force of this watershed Convention, we must be mindful of the great achievements it enabled. We must also bear in mind, however, the challenges that we still need to face. Contamination – both old and new – still seriously affects many countries; the needs of victims are often inadequately assessed and addressed, especially when it comes to different gender groups; the use of landmines still plagues many conflicts around the world.

We came a long way since 1997 but, as it clearly appeared during the last meeting of the National Mine Action Directors, the path ahead is still long. The international community needs, therefore, to reaffirm and strengthen its commitment and investments at all levels, in order to reach our common goal of a mine-free, and victim-free world. This year, the Fourth Review Conference of the Convention will give us a fundamental opportunity to look back and assess our work so far, and set the basis and a clear roadmap for our work during the next five years.

Mister President,

In meeting these challenges, we all have a role to play. Italy, which banned landmines at the domestic level before the APMBC was adopted, has translated this belief into a long-standing engagement in international assistance. Since 2001, such assistance has been channeled through a dedicated Fund, which has supported mine action activities such as clearance, stockpiles destruction, victim assistance and mine-risk education.

Through the Fund, we have also contributed to support the ISU of the Convention since its establishment. We believe that the Unit has consistently provided effective assistance to all States Parties in implementing the Convention's provisions, providing technical advice, building capacity, and promoting universalization. Italy is also particularly satisfied that, since last year, greater resources allowed the ISU to perform "enhanced support" activities in the area of Victim Assistance, which for us, as for many other States Parties, remains a key priority.

At the national level, the planning and budgeting process for Mine Action Activities in 2019 is still at the early stages. However, we can already confirm that we will be able to contribute to supporting the ISU activities at the same level as in 2018, with an amount of 57.500 euros.

Thank you, Mister President