

**6th International Pledging Conference for the Implementation of the
Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention**

Geneva, 23 February 2021

Statement by Estonia

Mr. President, Excellencies,

First, allow me to congratulate the Netherlands on assuming the Presidency of 19th Meeting of States Parties of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and assure you of Estonia's full support. Let me also thank the keynote speaker, Vice Minister van der Heijden, and the panellists for sharing their insightful ideas and information.

Estonia also aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union.

Mr. President,

2020 was an unusual year due to the Covid-19 pandemic, which disrupted strongly our activities in the disarmament fora. The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention is an excellent example how with enough political will and determination multilateral work can be carried out even in most difficult times. We warmly welcome your initiative to convene the Sixth International Pledging Conference virtually.

The Ottawa Convention is clearly one of the most successful international disarmament agreements that has brought clear results on the ground through mine clearance, stockpile destruction and victim assistance. Our work and support has to continue, since landmines and explosive remnants of war remain a threat in many parts of the world. Even in Estonia, we found and destroyed a record number of over 9000 explosive remnants of war in 2020.

Mr. President,

Estonia remains committed to supporting mine clearance activities to help mine affected States to meet their clearance obligations under the Convention. Over the years, we have gradually increased our contributions, including financial support to the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), as well as to clean-up of various explosive remnants of war and mine-clearance activities under bilateral and international humanitarian projects in Mali, Gaza, Libya, Lebanon Iraq, Syria, Ukraine and Afghanistan. In 2020, Estonia continued with its contribution to UNMAS to support the Mine Action programmes in Iraq and Syria.

Estonia has supported the Ottawa Implementation Support Unit (ISU) in achieving its mandate-based targets regularly since 2006 and we are planning to continue our support this year in the same amount as in 2020. With this, let me once again commend the ISU for their excellent work!

Thank you!