



Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Sixth Pledging Conference

23 February 2020

Statement by the HALO Trust

(Check Against Delivery)

Thank you Mr President,

I want to begin by acknowledging the efforts made by you and the ISU [Implementation Support Unit] in adapting this meeting in light of the continued challenges brought by COVID.

You have led the way in digital diplomacy since the onset of the pandemic. The efforts made to enable proceedings to continue ensure we achieve more together, through greater remote inclusion and participation.

Last year, during the virtual 18 MSP [18th Meeting of States Parties], HALO called for the sector to be more inclusive. More diverse. And more accessible. We called on you to be bold in how you integrate virtual and hybrid meetings in response to the constraints by COVID. You did so. And you did so when others didn't.

But as the conference session today is only presented in English, we must acknowledge that there is still room for innovation in addressing barriers to inclusion. We must continue to be bold. To innovate. And to identify and overcome all gaps to inclusion.

Mr President,

Our sector would not be where it is without continued support to the work of this Convention. Financial contributions to clearance are a cornerstone of its success. And so, on behalf of HALO, I acknowledge and thank all of our donors. This sector would not be where it is without you.

But as we work towards commitments for survey, clearance, risk education and support to victims, it is now more than ever appropriate to examine the role of innovation, capacity building and inclusion.

Alternative finance is just one area of innovation in our sector. But we remain convinced at HALO that it will be a key part of the sector's future, not least in our recovery from COVID and its reverberating impact.

With that in mind, we congratulate the UK in initiating a landmark study on mine action and alternative finance. We are honoured to be working with Social Finance and the UK's FCDO to undertake a feasibility study. And we are grateful for the project Steering Group members' support, as well as sector partners who have committed time to interviews so far.

Simply put, our sector has achieved the results it has because it has challenged norms and adapted. Mine Action needs continued support from our dedicated donors. But it also needs to embrace new approaches. And that includes alternative finance.



Mr President,

We said it during the MSP and we say it again today. HALO is firmly of the belief that the success of this sector – and its funding – depends on us moving beyond a ‘mine action’ silo. We must continue to link our work within the Sustainable Development Goals. And continue to use our common approaches to measuring impact to demonstrate our relevance and the importance of our work.

But we must be more proactive in looking outwards if we are to see an increase in momentum towards the shared goal of a Landmine Free 2025.

The shared global challenges of today – from climate change to COVID recovery and conflict – will not be met by individual organisations. Or individual sectors. They will be met if we have the right ambition to remain relevant. They will be built on our willingness to adapt.

And – most of all – they will be built if they draw on the determination that characterises our sector and this Convention.

Thank you.

ENDS