

**11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction  
(Phnom Penh, 28 November – 2 December 2011)**

*National Statement of ITALY delivered by*

*H.E. Michelangelo Pipan, Head of Delegation, Ambassador of Italy to the Kingdom of Cambodia*

Mr. President,

At the outset of my statement, while first of all congratulating you on your appointment as President of the 11th Meeting of the States Parties to the Anti Personnel ban Convention, I wish to express our sincere gratitude to the Kingdom of Cambodia for its generous and kind hospitality, and for the remarkably efficient organisation of our Meeting.

Cambodia has directly and severely suffered for the terrible consequences of the use of anti personnel mines and for the presence on its territory of explosive remnants of armed conflict. At the same time it has played a pivotal role in promoting the Convention. We therefore deem it only appropriate for our meeting to be held in its capital city Phnom Penh, as a concrete reminder for all of the inhumanity of such weapons and as a tribute to the commitment and to the achievements of the Country on this matter.

Italy fully subscribes to the statement of the spokesperson of the EU High Representative, Catherine Ashton, issued Sunday. Allow me however to add few remarks on a national capacity.

Italy has always been and remains a staunch supporter of the Ottawa Convention. Our commitment has been proven over the years, by destroying our stockpiles before the deadline set by the Convention, by generously supporting the Implementation Support Unity, by funding demining, victim assistance and mine risk education projects worldwide. At this Meeting of States Parties, we will confirm our full support to the Cartagena Action Plan, in the pursuit of the objective of a world free of antipersonnel landmines, reducing the number of victims and providing sustainable care for the victims of these weapons.

Mr. President, if it is true that areas to be cleared from mines are reducing, civilian populations – and in particular the more vulnerable parts of society, including people with disabilities – are still in dire need of assistance. This is why, also in line with the commitments agreed to in Cartagena two years ago, we have been focusing on victim assistance projects.

The Italian Fund on Humanitarian Demining, set up in 2011 and refinanced on a yearly basis ever since, is the main tool through which we carry out our assistance projects related to the implementation of the Ottawa Convention. In 2011, we have earmarked more than 2.5 million Euros for projects in different continents. This

current financial situation does not make us deflect from our commitment in this respect.

We apply an integrated approach to demining activities. Italy ratified in 2009 the Fifth Protocol of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, covering explosive remnants of war. In 2011, we ratified the Oslo Convention on Cluster Munitions. In addition to landmines, our demining projects cover the clearing of explosive remnants of war and cluster munitions from affected areas, including victim assistance and mine-risk education.

In conclusion, Mr. President allow me to reaffirm once again Italy's convinced, firm and lasting commitment to achieving the Ottawa Convention objectives. With this in mind we will support every decision of this Meeting that goes towards fulfilling those objectives.

Thank you for your attention.