

**STATEMENT**

**by H.E. Ambassador Yurii KLYMENKO,**

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Head of the delegation of Ukraine to the Seventeenth 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

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**Madam President,**

I would like to start by extending my warmest congratulations to you on the assumption of your duties and wishing you every success in this endeavour. Please be assured of my delegation's full support and cooperation with you to advance the objectives of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention.

**Madam President,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,**

Ukraine considers that the presence of anti-personnel mines and other dangerous explosive devices is a direct long-term threat to the civil population, as well as a significant challenge for humanitarian operations. Our country recognizes and highly values the important role played by the APMBC as an effective disarmament mechanism of sustaining regional stability and addressing post-conflict remedial measures in order to minimize the occurrence, risk and effects of Explosive Remnants of War (ERW). Supporting its universalization, our country acceded to the Convention on June 1, 2006 and, thus, obliged to destroy and dispose of all stockpiled anti-personnel mines, inherited from the former Soviet Union, which were kept at the arsenals of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

Fully abiding by its obligations under the APMBC, in particular, Article 1, the Ukrainian side does not develop, produce, otherwise acquire, stockpile, retain or transfer to anyone, directly or indirectly, anti-personnel mines, and does not assist, encourage or induce, in any way, anyone to engage in any activity prohibited under the APMBC. Accordingly, Ukraine has not been using and is not planning to use weaponry, banned by the Convention.

**Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,**

Since February 20, 2014 Ukraine, as you well know, is under the armed aggression of the Russian Federation. In this juncture I would like to draw your attention to the act of aggression against Ukraine committed by Russia just yesterday in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, when the Russian side, in violation of freedom of navigation, unlawfully used force against the ships of Ukrainian Naval Forces. These hostile actions led to the wounding and capturing of members of the crews of Ukrainian ships. The Ukrainian side considers such aggression as a violation of the

norms of the UN Charter and the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, which poses a threat for security of all states of the Black Sea region, and thus demands clear reaction of the international community.

Due to the ongoing armed aggression of the Russian Federation, which is not a State Party to the APMBC and actively uses anti-personnel mines, our country has to deal with a drastically increased number of this weaponry and other dangerous ERW in the southeast of Ukraine. In particular, mines of the type TM-62M, PTM-1G, PDM-1M, MON-50, MON-90, MON-100, OZM-72, PMN-4, POM-2, POM-2P, which are used by the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, are being found on south-eastern Ukrainian soil on a daily basis. Planted by Russia-backed illegal armed groups in residential areas and routes of communication between inhabited localities, these mines, which have contaminated over 8% of the territory of Donetsk and Luhansk regions, pose a direct threat not only to the military personnel, but also to the civil population, causing death and severe casualties among innocent citizens, including children. The Russian Federation has also used anti-personnel mines to establish mine fields on the administrative border between Crimea and the rest of Ukraine's territory.

Thus, this indiscriminate weaponry continues to be one of the most common causes of casualties among the civilian population in eastern Ukraine (about one third of the total number of civilians affected by the armed conflict). During 2018 (over the period of 10 months) more than 50 people were killed and 209 were injured due to the hostile activities of illegal armed groups in eastern Ukraine: 112 of these victims, including children, suffered from mines and other ERW. In late September 2018 in the Donetsk region (near the city of Gorlovka) 4 teenagers suffered from mine explosions, 3 of them died as a result.

Furthermore, the broad presence of anti-personnel mines and constant shelling significantly impede efforts aimed at the organization and conduct of humanitarian operations. These subversive activities by the illegal armed groups lead to the closure of main access corridors to the temporarily occupied territories of Donetsk and Luhansk regions. Currently only 5 official control-crossing points of the demarcation line are functioning, of which only 2 can be used for the transportation of humanitarian goods.

Despite the above-mentioned significant challenges in the security field related to Russia's ongoing since 2014 armed aggression against Ukraine, our country does its utmost to further comply with its obligations under this fundamental international document, as well as the Maputo Action Plan, in particular its paragraphs 12 to 18.

Since July 6, 2014 over 40 demining groups, created by relevant Ukrainian governmental bodies, in close cooperation with the UN Mine Action Service, the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, OSCE, NATO, the International Committee of the Red Cross, Danish Refugee Council, UNICEF, Halo Trust and others, have been actively engaged in performing a broad range of humanitarian demining activities on the territories of Donetsk and Luhansk regions, liberated from the control of Russia-backed terrorists. I would like to note, in this context, the positive outcome of OSCE Secretary General Thomas Greminger's

meeting with the representatives of the above-mentioned organizations during his visit to Ukraine last year.

As of November 2018, over 3700 hectares of land and 16 hectares of water areas on the liberated territories in Donetsk and Luhansk regions were cleared. Over 22600 explosive devices were deactivated, including 17 specially planted extremely dangerous improvised ones. Thanks to this hard work, as well as the necessary educational activities conducted among the population by the Ukrainian side and our partners in the field of spreading awareness about the existing dangers of mines among over 25000 people and marking of contaminated territory, the number of ERW victims has dropped in 2018 in comparison to 2017 by almost 2 times, and comparing to 2015 – by 2.5 times.

Moreover, relevant national policies, which will further ensure humanitarian demining in Ukraine, as well as facilitate and create better conditions for cooperation with our international partners, are being developed. For example, Resolution № 1071 of December 13, 2017 of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine approved the State Program for Restoration and Development of Peace in Eastern Regions of Ukraine for the period of 2017 – 2021, which foresees the fulfilment of humanitarian demining and examination of territories and water areas of Donetsk and Luhansk regions. This State Program, in particular, envisages humanitarian demining of 700 000 hectares of contaminated territory during 2018 – 2020 and will be financed through the State budget of Ukraine.

The International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) were introduced in our country by the Resolution of Ukraine's National Body of Standardization № 230 of August 8, 2016. At the moment, the National Mine Action Standards, as well as the relevant legislation are being drafted on the basis of the IMAS. This task is expected to be finalized by the end of this year.

In accordance with Article 6 of the Convention, our country is also actively engaged in the socio-economic reintegration and employment of mine victims, which receive relevant compensations and treatment in special rehabilitation centres. All of these victims will be further enregistered in the national mine victim database, which is currently being elaborated in Ukraine.

In pursuance of Article 4 of the APMBC, Ukraine, along with its international partners, is continuing to ensure the disposal of PFM-1 type mines. Accordingly, within the framework of the “Partnership for Peace” Program, the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine, the NATO Support and Procurement Agency and Ukraine's State Enterprise “Scientific Production Association “Pavlograd Chemical Plant” have concluded a contract which envisages the disposal of 3 192 696 PFM-1S type mines by 2021.

Nonetheless, much more remains to be done. Due to the ongoing aggression against Ukraine, the disposal of anti-personnel mines and clearance of contaminated areas continues to be of vital importance. Unfortunately, however, Ukraine's resources are limited, so these humanitarian demining and disposal activities would be significantly facilitated by further intensified cooperation with the international community, first of all in the field of sharing modern ERW detection and destruction technologies, providing necessary equipment and financial assistance.

**Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,**

This brings me to the issue of Article 5 implementation in Ukraine.

As many of you know, in 2007 Ukraine declared its full compliance with Article 5 of the Convention by submitting its first national report under Article 7 of the APMBC, confirming the absence of areas under Ukraine's jurisdiction and control, contaminated with anti-personnel mines. Later on this was further confirmed in yearly national reports from 2007 through 2013.

Currently, however, due to Russian aggression, Ukraine does not have control over the temporary occupied parts of our territory in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, as well as over the temporarily occupied by Russia Autonomous Republic of Crimea. The ongoing military standoff in eastern Ukraine and continuous hostilities by the aggressor state cause further contaminations of the territories along the contact line. The irregularity and non-selectivity of the use of anti-personal mines by the Russia-backed illegal armed groups in Donetsk and Luhansk regions do not allow to accurately estimate the scale of ERW contamination and precisely identify all mined areas. Thus, it is quite difficult to arrange fully effective national programs for their demining, as well as to determine the resources required to carry out relevant mine clearance operations. In fact, complete demining of contaminated territories in the southeast of Ukraine will only be possible after the Russian Federation and Russia-backed illegal armed groups cease their hostilities, constitutional order is effectively restored on the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine and our country regains full control of its state border.

Against this backdrop, our delegation herewith requests States Parties to consider granting Ukraine a 5 year extension for the implementation of its obligations under Article 5 of the Convention (i.e. until June 1, 2021).

Ukraine's extension request, which has been submitted to the Implementation Support Unit and Committee on Article 5 implementation of the APMBC, is available on the Convention's website and contains further in-depth, detailed and technical information regarding the scope of the issue on the ground and current challenges in the field of anti-personnel mine contamination in the southeast of Ukraine.

**Madam President,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,**

Our country, as always, remains fully committed to its obligations under this indispensable international treaty. We hope for the understanding of the Member States of the exceptional circumstances and challenges affecting nowadays the realisation by Ukraine of Article 5 of the APMBC, and rely on the worldwide community's further support of our endeavours in implementing the Convention.

The delegation of Ukraine looks forward to productive and fruitful discussions, and is ready for joint efforts to achieve a successful outcome of the Meeting.

**I thank you.**