



Foreign & Commonwealth Office

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION: 17TH MEETING OF STATES PARTIES

UK Statement under Agenda Item 9c on Cooperation and Assistance: Conclusions and recommendations related to the mandate of the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance on Thursday 29 November 2018

Madam President

The United Kingdom aligns itself with the statement of the European Union, and makes some comments in a national capacity. Long after a conflict finishes, landmines continue to devastate people's lives. It is shocking to read the Landmine Monitor's report that in 2017, more than 7000 people were killed or injured by landmines or explosive remnants of war. The UK affirms that anti-personnel landmines are indiscriminate weapons of war that harm civilians - and so must be eliminated.

This affirmation is underpinned through our substantial commitment to global mine action. Our \$127 million US dollar programme operates in some of the densest minefields in the world, such as the border minefields with Thailand in Cambodia; former battlefields in Zimbabwe; and land contaminated by more recent conflicts in Somalia and South Sudan. The UK recognises the need to balance areas of legacy contamination with "new" landmine contamination. That is why we are continuing to work in Afghanistan, Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Zimbabwe, Somalia and South Sudan - and why we have expanded our reach to include operations in Angola, Lebanon, Sudan, as well as Iraq, Syria and Yemen. In addition, the UK's Conflict, Stability and Security Fund also supports mine action programmes around the world.

This Fund had an allocated budget of over \$10 million dollars for demining activity for the last year. Mine action has taken place in countries including Ukraine, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Sri Lanka, Yemen and Afghanistan.

Our programmes are designed to help those who are most vulnerable to the dangers of mines and explosive remnants of war and to help countries meet their national mine action commitments. Our mine risk education programmes have reached more than 490,000 people including many women and children. The UK also attaches importance to gender-awareness in our programmes. Mine action is most effective where it takes the different needs of women, girls, men and boys into account.

Tailored monitoring and evaluation tools are critical for ensuring we achieve the best value from our programmes and also to generate evidence of which approaches work best in effecting change on the ground. This evaluation generates lessons for future programming for the UK and for the wider sector. More information was shared in our side event on Tuesday.

Madam President, we assist States to deliver on their core obligations under the Convention, by supporting activities relating to the clearance and destruction of anti-personnel landmines. However, the UK also recognises the importance of helping states to support the individuals impacted by the use of landmines. We firmly believe that this support needs to be non-discriminatory and that it should be delivered through the most effective means to improve capacity in a sustainable manner. In the UK's experience, support and assistance to victims is best provided through broader social and economic development programmes in affected countries, rather than through targeting particular groups.

The UK works to strengthen health systems in many of its partner countries, as well as mainstreaming social inclusion across its broader development interventions. We encourage close coordination between different stakeholders to support the identification and referral of survivors and their families to the relevant social and medical services.

The UK is committed to supporting people with disabilities. In July 2018, the UK hosted its first-ever Global Disability Summit. This Summit brought together global leaders,

technology companies and charities, in London, to tackle barriers that prevent people living with disabilities in the world's poorest countries from reaching their full potential.

In closing, the UK is proud to support the Convention's goals, and to continue to offer substantial assistance to mine action globally. We encourage all States Parties to augment their efforts where possible to help us collectively tackle the scourge of landmines.

Thank you very much.