



**EU General Statement
18th Meeting of States Parties
Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
Geneva, 16 November 2020**

Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, the Republic of North Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Serbia* and Albania*, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the EFTA country Iceland, member of the European Economic Area, as well as the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this statement.

At the outset, allow me to commend you, Ambassador Mohammed and your team, for your skilful leadership in the run up to the 18th Meeting of States Parties, which is extremely difficult in the current global pandemic context. We appreciate that Sudan's Presidency has made all necessary arrangements for this meeting to take place in an inclusive way and to provide a good platform to take stock of the progress of the implementation of the Oslo Action Plan. You can rely on our full support.

The Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention, as reaffirmed by the 164 States Parties at the Fourth Review Conference, represents the global norm against anti-personnel mines, a norm that has saved thousands of lives and spared countless of children, who are disproportionately impacted and are a particularly high-risk group with regard to anti-personnel mines. We appeal to all actors to refrain from the production, acquisition, stockpiling, trade, retention or transfer of anti-personnel mines and strongly condemn their use anywhere, anytime, and by any actor, whether States or non-State actors. The burden placed by anti-personnel mines and explosive remnants of war on individuals, families, communities, regions and States remains high and unacceptable.

* The Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

We call upon all non-States Parties, in particular major possessors of anti-personnel mines, to follow a self-declared policy of non-use, which will contribute to the universalization of the Ottawa Convention. In that regard, the EU calls upon the United States to re-examine its decision to re-authorize the use of anti-personnel mines by US military forces outside of the Korean Peninsula. The EU counts on the US to remain a partner and a top provider of anti-mine action assistance.

We consider the Fourth Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, held in Oslo in November of last year, as a great success and an important milestone for the global ban on anti-personnel mines and an important step towards the achievement of its ultimate goal of a world without anti-personnel mines, whether industrially manufactured, or improvised. The EU is a strong supporter of this Convention and will do its utmost to support its full implementation and universalisation. We encourage all States Parties to intensify their efforts to complete their time-bound obligations as soon as possible, and to the fullest extent possible by 2025. The EU assistance covers the full scope of mine action: land release, stockpile destruction, victim assistance, risk education, advocacy, capacity building and research and development for mine detection and clearance technology and equipment. The total assistance provided by the EU and the EU Member States in the past 5 years amounts to more than 800 million EUR.

We consider the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention to be a key disarmament instrument and a success story of effective multilateralism and diplomacy. Its integrity, full implementation and strict application must be guaranteed and universal adherence pursued. In this context, we call on all States Parties to fulfil their financial obligations to the Convention in full and on time to ensure that the meetings can be held. All EU Member States have joined the Convention and we urge all States that have not yet done so to join the Convention without delay, or as an interim step, to comply with the norms of the Convention.

The EU is committed to mainstreaming a gender perspective into its mine action work and we continue to support the work of stakeholders in mine action to integrate gender and diversity into their humanitarian mine action policies.

Thank you, Mr. President