



BELGIUM

18th Meeting of the States Parties Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention - November 2020

Mine Clearance

We wish to thank the Committee on Article 5 Implementation for the preparation of this discussion. Belgium is honored that its candidacy for membership of this committee in 2021 is presented for decision at this Meeting of States Parties.

Belgium aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union and wishes to make the following remarks in its national capacity.

We welcome the report by Chile on the completion of its Article V obligations earlier this year and the announcement made by the United Kingdom on the finalization of mine clearance on the Falklands. These achievements strengthen the global norm and constitute a considerable step towards a landmine free 2025.

We are concerned that, despite the efforts undertaken by the Committee, Eritrea has not yet submitted a request for extension of its mine clearance deadline (31.12.2020) and that it will therefore be in a situation of non-compliance at the end of this year. We wish to remind all States Parties of the importance of timely submission of extension requests and, in this regard, we acknowledge the requests submitted for consideration by a number of States.

The increased use of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature, mainly by non-state actors, poses a significant challenge for article 5 implementation. The diversity and increased sophistication of these IEDs render detection and demining more complex and time-consuming. We need to sustain our efforts to identify efficient, safe, and cost-effective solutions to counter the risks they pose. Information-sharing plays an important role in this regard, in particular by operators in the field, whether they are NGO's, state authorities, private actors or peacekeeping missions. The exchange of information on the materials and technologies used to manufacture IEDs provides the basis for more efficient prevention and remediation. Better knowledge of how explosive and non-explosive items end up as components of IED's will help us optimize trade controls and disrupt the trafficking of precursors.