



European Union

EU Statement on Cooperation and Assistance 18th Meeting of States Parties Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Geneva, 19 November 2020

Mr. Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. 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 Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this statement.

The European Union wishes to thank the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance for its continuous efforts to strengthen the partnerships between States in a position to provide assistance, both financial and technical, and States Parties requiring assistance and to promote dialogue among all stakeholders.

The EU and its Member States have a long history of support for mine action that benefits nearly all heavily mine-affected countries and regions of the world. The total assistance provided by the EU and the EU Member States in the past 5 years amounts to more than 800 million EUR. Concerning the EU projects, in 2019, more than 68 million EUR have been committed to various programmes in 11 mine-affected countries, such as the recent projects in Afghanistan (risk education), Libya (victim assistance), Sri Lanka (mine clearance) and Ukraine (victim assistance). Our assistance covers the whole scope of mine action: clearance, stockpile destruction, victim assistance, risk education, advocacy and capacity building and is provided in the light of the new Oslo Action Plan. On a thematic level, the EU has been supporting further efforts to improve national reporting, as an indispensable element of transparency within the Convention. We

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

appreciate in particular the inclusion in these reports of the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities, including those related to gender and cultural background.

The EU directly supports the Implementation Support Unit by means of EU Council Decision 2017/1428/CFSP, worth 2.3 million Euros, which will come to its end in February 2021. A new successor framework is under the adoption process with the aim to ensure a seamless transition and enter into force in March 2021. When adopted, the EU Council Decision will provide up to 3,5 million EUR for an extended period of 4 years with the objective to contribute to the full implementation of the Oslo Action Plan and its concrete actions. The EU Council Decision will carry out a variety of universalization efforts. These would include high-level visits, technical meetings and/or workshops, sponsorship of relevant officials from target States to attend Convention meetings, and ambassadorial-level meetings at the United Nations headquarters or any of its subsidiary regional headquarters. In the same vein, it will extend its support to States via national and/or regional stakeholders dialogues.

The EU welcomes the individualised approach format that the Committee is implementing in order to give a platform for interested affected States Parties to present their specific challenges and needs to relevant stakeholders, including mine action operators and donors. We encourage all relevant stakeholders to engage with such models of international cooperation and enhance national ownership. Cooperation and assistance helps States in need to implement and meet their national obligations.

In the affected countries, mine action is key to the realisation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We emphasize the importance of connecting the Sustainable Developments Goals and development strategies with mine action. 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. Chair