

## **Agenda 10 b – Clearing mined areas**

The 19MSP gives the opportunity to underscore the importance of addressing the remaining challenges that the States Parties are facing. It will serve as a reminder of the necessity of fulfilling time-bound commitments resulting from the provisions of the Convention and reaching in this way, the ultimate goal of a *Mine-Free World*. We welcome the second Progress Report covering 2020-2021, which specifically measures progress made since the adoption of the Oslo Action Plan (OAP) at the Review Conference in 2019.

We attach special attention to the fulfillment of article 7 reporting obligations. Without the data provided in national reports the fulfillment of time-bound commitments would be hardly possible, especially where States Parties have to conduct surveys and clearance activities in compliance with Article 5.

There are still 33 States Parties in the process of implementing Article 5 of the Ottawa Convention. Poland regrets that until now, Eritrea has not yet presented an Article 5 extension request and finds itself in a situation of non-compliance, since the expiration of its December 2020 Article 5 deadline. The EU in its Statement on Mine Clearance (Article 5) has expressed concerns regarding Eritrea, which we fully support.

Mine clearance and destruction of stockpiles should remain high on the Convention's agenda. Information released in Landmine Monitor 2021 highlights that contamination was one of the main causes behind continuing high numbers of casualties due to mines and ERWs, which in 2020 amounted to 7,073 with 2,492 people killed and 4,561 injured. Approximately 80% of these casualties were civilians and children accounted for half of this number.

Let me end with commending Ukraine's ongoing efforts in dealing with its multifaceted and severe mine problem. According to UNDP, since the start of the 2014 conflict in Eastern Ukraine there have been 1,230 civilian casualties claimed by mines and ERWs. The authorities in Kiev have in 2020 amended the national law on mine action. The national institutional structure is evolving, also through the establishment of two mine action centers. These positive developments would not be possible without external help from bilateral and multilateral actors, and first of all, Ukraine's determination in countering the negative effects of an external aggression on its sovereign territory.