



European Union
EU Statement on Mine Clearance (Article 5)
19th Meeting of States Parties
Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
The Hague, 17 November 2021

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 align themselves with this statement.

The European Union would like to thank the Committee for its work with regard to the implementation of Article 5 and related mine clearance actions of the Oslo Action Plan.

The EU remains committed to supporting mine clearance activities to help mine-affected States Parties meet their Article 5 obligations under the Convention. More than 87 million EUR of EU assistance for mine action was earmarked for mine clearance in 2021 across 20 countries. Mine action is therefore critical to the

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

peace and security agenda, humanitarian emergency response and sustainable development, and positively contributes to stabilization and sustaining peace.

The continued threats posed by anti-personnel mines, explosive remnants of war and improvised explosive devices to human lives, security and humanitarian efforts, still affect about 60 countries and territories in conflict or post-conflict environment. Effects are felt by many generations after conflicts, children and vulnerable groups are among those suffering the most.

The EU would like to express its strong support towards the 32 States Parties that are making efforts to complete mine clearance operations, preferably by 2025, and bring us towards the fulfilment of our shared goal of a world free of anti-personnel mines. Significant progress has been made in the implementation of the Oslo Action Plan in that regard, but persistent challenges remain.

The EU wishes to recall that some Improvised explosive devices fit the definition of an anti-personnel mine as they are “a mine designed to be exploded by the presence, proximity or contact of a person and that will incapacitate, injure or kill one or more persons” and therefore should be considered and reported as anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature. According to the 2021 edition of the Landmine Monitor, anti-personnel mines of improvised nature have been recently deployed by non-State armed groups in Afghanistan, Colombia, India, Myanmar, Nigeria and Pakistan.

The EU considers that it is important to continue raising awareness of the obligation of States Parties to address this type of contamination within the framework of the Convention and to report the use of anti-personnel mines of improvised nature.

Several States Parties have submitted requests for consideration by the 19MSP, amongst which, some have declared completion of their Article 5 obligations in the past and have identified previously unknown mined areas or newly mined areas. The EU acknowledges and values the effort and commitment to the Convention's implementation of these countries, namely, Cyprus, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea Bissau, Mauritania, Nigeria, Somalia and Turkey.

Over the years, we witnessed an increase of repeated extensions, missed deadlines, delayed implementation and non-implementation of commitments. All of these have significant humanitarian and socio-economic impact. The EU expresses its sincere regret that Eritrea remains in non-compliance with the Convention following the expiration of its Article 5 deadline on 31 December 2020. Eritrea has also not submitted an Article 7 Report since 2014 and remains unresponsive to efforts to establish a cooperative dialogue with the President and Committee on Article 5 Implementation. The EU would like to once again urge Eritrea to draw upon the resources of the Implementation Support Unit and the guidance of the Article 5 committee to develop its request and to submit it without further delay.

The EU considers that low reporting rates remains an issue and that situation must be improved. This concerns reporting obligations under article 3, 7 and 9 on the implementation of the Convention and the Oslo Action Plan. The actions regarding reporting, as foreseen in the Convention, as decided by the States Parties during Review Conferences, as well as on a voluntary basis, as encouraged during Meetings of States Parties, require more focused attention. The EU calls for increased reporting rates as well as for an innovative, coordinated approach and a comprehensive program aiming at advocating, assisting and promoting the reporting under the mandate of the President.

We realize that there is a clear need for strengthened cooperation, assistance and mobilization of resources towards achieving the goal of a mine free world. The lack of financial resources is the main challenge, and the EU calls upon all actors, public or private to collectively explore options possible for new and alternative sources of funding.

Thank you, Mr. Chair