

**Nineteenth Meeting of the State Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
15-19 November 2021
The Hague, Netherlands**

Address by Norwegian People's Aid

Thank you, Mr. President,

Two years on from the Oslo Action Plan and four years to the 2025 benchmark, the need for timely and meaningful implementation of the Mine Ban Treaty lingers over our sector. As per Mine Action Review 2021 report, only Oman, Peru, Sri Lanka, and Zimbabwe scored as on track to fulfill their Article 5 obligations within their existing deadlines. While we appreciate that in times of global pandemic there are competing priorities, with donor support to mine action and disarmament waning, timely completion is jeopardised. An alarming number of affected States Parties are still not on track or unclear whether they are on track to meet their Article 5 deadlines, with Eritrea in serious violation of the Convention, thus protracting the mine contamination problem further into the future. NPA commends the strong engagement and work done by the Article 5 Committee. We do also believe there would be benefit in having an open and consultative review of the Article 5 extension request process under the 20MSP presidency and the establishment of a broader analysis group, and NPA stands ready to participate in both.

While some affected States Parties have limited resources and are faced with new contamination, we believe the core of the problem lies primarily with a lack of political will and national ownership in many affected States Parties. We recall that States Parties have the legal obligation to implement the Convention as soon as possible and must demonstrate national ownership and political will to do so, as highlighted in Action 1 of the Oslo Action Plan.

We have also witnessed positive examples of political will where a country is willing to complete, but lacks funds to do so, such as for instance Angola, Mauritania, and Zimbabwe. In such cases the donor community must support the affected State Party in completing the final part of their Article 5 fulfillment, in the spirit of the Convention. National Platforms, as per Action 44 of the Oslo Action Plan, have proven to be a successful recipe for timely completion, fostering dialogue, good practice exchange, and strengthening national ownership. We encourage all States Parties to establish National Platforms and partner in support of each other to “finish the job.”

On the road to completion, it is also essential to reflect on *how* we get to the finish line. Two years since we met in Oslo, only 50% of affected States Parties have integrated gender and diverse needs of affected communities into their national workplans and strategies, as per Mine Action Review's monitoring of Action 3 of the Oslo Action Plan. This is disappointing, substandard and mainstreaming gender and diversity should not be an optional exercise. Mainstreaming gender and diversity into programming

ensures effectiveness of the mine action response which benefits *all*. It is imperative donors, affected States Parties and operators commit to gender and diversity sensitive programming, thus ensuring full implementation of the Oslo Action Plan, and meaningful and sustainable fulfillment of the Mine Ban Treaty without leaving anyone behind.

Our climate is changing. Increased heat, rain and draught will lead to more landslides, cyclones and storms. This will inevitably impact our work, where we work, and where needs are highest. It is crucial for any realistic discussion on the implementation of Article 5 that the impact of climate change be explored and understood, and that measures are taken, by national authorities, donors, and operators, alike. We must deliver our utmost efforts as a sector to limit *our own* carbon and environmental footprint and NPA stands ready to contribute to a constructive dialogue on this in the time coming.

NPA also wishes to align ourselves with the Statements of the Mine Action Review, the Gender and Diversity Working Group, the Explosive Ordnance Risk Education Advisory Group, of which we are an Advisory Board Member, a Co-Coordinator, and a Member respectively.

Thank you.