

Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC)

19th Meeting of the State Parties: 15-19 November 2021

Statement by India

Mr. President

1. The delegation of India warmly welcomes you as the President of the 19th Meeting of State Parties of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. We thank the Netherlands and the APMBC Secretariat for their valuable work during the year in spite of the difficult circumstances due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

2. India has been participating in the meetings of the APMBC as an Observer. India values the vision of a world free of anti-personnel land mines and is committed to their eventual elimination. India's participation in the Convention's Meetings of States Parties and Review Conferences, is testament to our continued commitment to this important objective. India believes that the availability of militarily effective alternative technologies that can perform cost-effectively, the legitimate defensive role of anti-personnel landmines will considerably facilitate the goal of the complete elimination of anti-personnel mines.

3. India is a party to the Amended Protocol-II of the CCW which takes into account the legitimate defense requirements of States especially those with long borders like India. India has also fulfilled its obligations under Amended Protocol-II on non-production of non-detectable mines as well as rendering all anti-personnel mines detectable. India is observing a moratorium on the export and transfer of anti-personnel landmines.

4. Furthermore, India has taken a number of measures to address humanitarian concerns arising from the use of anti-personnel landmines in accordance with International Humanitarian Law. India remains committed to increased international cooperation and assistance for mine clearance as well as rehabilitation of mine-victims and has been contributing to this end through technical assistance and expertise.

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5. India is a leading contributor to UN peacekeeping operations and has extended assistance to international demining and rehabilitation efforts. India has provided training to mine clearance teams who have undertaken mine clearance tasks in several countries including Cambodia, Lao PDR, Angola and Afghanistan in the recent past.

6. India's Centre of Excellence for Counter-IED training has provided training in mine clearance and explosives disposal to over 500 personnel from various countries in the last five years. We have also undertaken specialist training on Counter IED, bomb disposal and demining operations with numerous partner countries, including Australia, Cambodia, Indonesia and Uzbekistan. We remain committed to further capacity-building and assistance to countries upon their request.

7. India's 12 member team of experts participated in a joint counter explosive threat task forces training exercise Ardent Defender-2019 in Ontario, Canada. About 130 personnel from 13 African States participated in exercise AFINDEX, a multinational exercise on demining and unexploded ordinance held in India in March 2019. 20th International National Security Guard Seminar on Counter IED was held near New Delhi from 12-13 February, 2020 and was attended by 34 foreign delegates in addition to the Indian delegates.

8. On the occasion of the 150th Birth Anniversary celebrations of Mahatma Gandhi, India had launched the 'India for Humanity' initiative from 2018-2023 and conducted 13 artificial limb fitment camps and fitted more than 6500 artificial limbs in the last three years in Malawi, Iraq, Nepal, Egypt, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Syria, Vietnam, Tanzania, Senegal and Namibia. With successful efforts under this initiative, the prosthetic limb, popularly known as Jaipur Foot, has gained further recognition worldwide for its efficacy, safety and cost-effectiveness.

9. India's ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities underscores the importance we attach to victim assistance. We have been cooperating and providing assistance to various countries and stand ready to contribute towards capacity building, victim assistance and victim rehabilitation, upon request from countries in future under the UN mandate.

I thank you Mr. President.
