

Austrian Statement
Intersessional meeting
Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
Geneva, 22 – 24 June 2021

Mr. President,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of Austria. Austria fully aligns herself with the Statement delivered by the European Union today.

Let me offer a few additional remarks from a national perspective:

To begin with we would like to thank Ambassador Robert Gabriëlse, his team and the ISU for smoothly preparing the Intersessional Meeting, as we attach great importance to it and to the possibility of sharing information on the progress made and the remaining challenges in preparation of the 19MSP.

Furthermore we would like to thank the Committees (on Article 5 Implementation, on Cooperative Compliance, on Victim Assistance and on Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance) for their dedicated work and continuous efforts.

Austria strongly condemns the killing of 11 members of HALO Trust and 15 injured during a heinous attack on a demining camp in the Baghlan Province of Afghanistan on the 8th of June. This is a shocking violation of international humanitarian law.

Austria strongly condemns the use of anti-personnel mines anywhere, anytime, and by any actor, whether States or non-State actors.

The humanitarian burden placed by anti-personnel mines on individuals, families, communities, regions and States is high and unacceptable.

Since the negotiations of the Convention, Austria has been a staunch supporter of the humanitarian objective and the purpose of the Convention.

Since then, thousands of lives and limbs have been saved. Hundreds of square kilometers of land were cleared and returned to their socio-economic use.

Pending clearance, risk awareness contributes to preventing further humanitarian harm.

Care and rehabilitation, social and economic reintegration, of mine victims has made a difference for many individuals, families and communities.

The Convention's impressive record of accomplishment puts responsibility on the mine ban community to continue the success story.

Austria encourages all States Parties to intensify their efforts to complete their time-bound obligations as soon as possible, and to the fullest extent possible.

Progress in implementation, particularly on the time bound obligations remains key to continue the success story.

Particularly progress on mine clearance makes a difference for affected communities and livelihoods.

In the Oslo Action Plan “States Parties reiterated the need to increase the pace of survey and clearance activities to meet Article 5 obligations”.

Action 23 of the Oslo Action Plan further specifies the need for detailed work plans.

We also wish to highlight Action 24, requesting extension requests to include detailed multi-year plans for context-specific mine risk education and reduction in affected communities.

Mr. President,

There is no one size fits all in mine action.

Reporting to the Convention is not only an obligation, it is also a helpful tool to assess progress on implementation for specific situations.

We commend those States Parties with obligations under Art.5 that have already submitted the report on the progress towards completion, as requested by the decision of the States Parties to grant the extension.

Austria encourages others to follow suit.

We are convinced that to continue the impressive progress of the convention, and to promote the norm against antipersonnel mines and humanitarian objectives we should collectively ensure the implementation of provisions set by the Convention and the Oslo Action Plan.

Thank you, Mr. President