

**Anti-Personal Mine Ban Convention Intersessional Meeting**  
**Thematic session on implementation of obligations**  
**on destruction of anti-personnel mines in mined areas under Article 5**

**Intervention by Ukraine**

*June 23, 2021*

**Mr. President,**

I would like to use this opportunity to provide an update on the implementation by Ukraine of Article 5 of the APMBC.

Ukraine highly appreciates the decision by the States Parties to the Convention to extend until 1 December 2023 the deadline for completion by my country of the destruction of placed anti-personnel mines in accordance with the above-mentioned Article. Though it will give Ukraine additional time to cope with the issue of humanitarian demining, the problem that led to the delay with full implementation of Article 5 of the Convention, and continues “to fuel” the issue, remains. And you all know well what the problem is.

Since February 20, 2014 Ukraine, has been resisting the armed aggression of the Russian Federation, which is not a State Party to the APMBC and actively uses anti-personnel mines against my country.

Ukraine does not exercise control over the temporary occupied areas in Donetsk and Luhansk regions, as well as over the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, temporarily occupied by Russia. The ongoing military standoff in eastern Ukraine and continuous hostilities by the aggressor state cause further contaminations of the territories along the contact line.

The irregularity and non-selectivity of the use of anti-personal mines by the armed units of the Russian occupation administration in Donetsk and Luhansk regions do not allow to accurately evaluate the scale of mine contamination and precisely identify all mined areas.

According to preliminary estimates, about 7,000 sq. km in the government-controlled areas and approximately 14,000 sq. km of the temporary occupied territories of Donetsk and Luhansk regions and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, are contaminated with landmines and explosive remnants of war.

Thus, it is quite difficult to put in place fully effective national programs for their demining, as well as to determine the resources required to carry out relevant mine clearance operations. In fact, complete demining of the contaminated territories in the east of Ukraine will only be possible after the Russian Federation and the armed units of the Russian occupation administration completely cease their hostilities, withdraw their forces, constitutional order is effectively restored on the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, including Ukraine’s Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, and my country regains full control over its state border.

### **Distinguished delegates,**

Despite of all these challenges Ukraine continues taking the necessary measures for humanitarian demining to ensure the safety of civilians and to create conditions for sustainable development in the affected regions.

To coordinate the mine action activities, the Ministry of Defense annually develops the Action Plan on humanitarian demining in the territories, liberated from occupation authorities in Donetsk and Luhansk regions. The 2021 Action Plan No.222/u/1 was approved by the Defense Minister on February 15, 2021. The main objectives of the Plan are as follow: to carry out technical and non-technical survey of potentially dangerous areas suspected or confirmed to be contaminated with APMs, anti-vehicle mines and ERW; to demine in the community areas; to provide the safety guarantees during restoration of infrastructural facilities and respective clearance activities in agricultural areas.

Activities to establish National mine action authority and Mine action center are under way. At present, the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine is implementing the provisions of the Law of Ukraine "On Mine Action in Ukraine" dated December 6, 2018 No. 2642-VIII (as amended on September 17, 2020). The Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine "On the establishment of National Mine Action Authority" has been drafted and submitted to the Government for consideration. At the same time, in accordance with the joint directive of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine and the State Special Transport Service, organizational and practical measures are being taken to establish a Mine action center in Chernihiv.

In course of 2021 a total of 952 hectares of mine contaminated lands and 1,65 hectares of mine contaminated water areas in the affected parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions have been cleared by mine clearing detachments of the State Emergency Services of Ukraine. Besides more than 14.3 thousand ERWs have been deactivated and eventually destroyed.

### **Distinguished delegates,**

To effectively cope with the threats and challenges posed by the different types of mines and ERW Ukraine develops successful cooperation with the international partners.

Since 2016, international non-governmental organizations have been assisting the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine in demining of our territories and we are thankful for that.

Over 40 demining groups, created by relevant Ukrainian governmental bodies, in close cooperation with the UN Mine Action Service, the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, OSCE, NATO, the International Committee of the Red Cross, Swiss Mine Action Fund, Danish Demining Group, UNICEF, Halo Trust and others, have been actively engaged in conducting of a broad range of humanitarian demining activities on the territories of Donetsk and Luhansk regions, liberated from the control of Russia-backed armed groups.

Ukraine is also grateful to the OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine for considerable support and assistance in mine action sphere. The total budget of relevant demining projects amounts to € 2.168.620.

I cannot but mention here the great support provided by our good friends from the United States of America, Canada and the United Kingdom for the mine action projects.

Mine clearance is very often accompanied by mine risk education aimed at preventing new victims. The respective measures to inform the Ukrainian population about the mine risks are taken in accordance with the annual Action Plan on humanitarian demining in the territories, liberated from occupation authorities in Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

During the first quarter of 2021 on the territory of Donetsk and Luhansk regions a total of 1.260 mine awareness outreach activities have been organized that covered over 25 thousand 335 people. Respective mine awareness campaign included outreach to the target audience through television, radio, internet, other public media as well as governmental resources.

The Ministry of Defense of Ukraine, with the assistance of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining and the OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine, has developed an Interactive map of territories contaminated with mines and unexploded ordnance, which is freely accessible at the official website of the Ministry of Defense.

The above-mentioned map shows the identified areas, which are suspected or confirmed to be contaminated, the type of hazard, the date of identification, the organization responsible for the demining activities in the specified area and location of the nearest medical facilities, which may provide medical care for mine explosive injuries.

### **Distinguished delegates,**

Ukraine as one of the most mine-affected countries in the world knows on its own example how these indiscriminate means of war continues to kill people and tear societies apart years after a conflict has ended. They continue to instill terror, stop people from returning to their normal lives and refugees to their own homes. Thus, we believe that implementing the Ottawa Convention is fundamental for peace, stabilisation and economic recovery. It is our responsibility to preserve and strengthen it and ensure its universalisation.

The delegation of Ukraine looks forward to a productive and fruitful discussions and stands ready to exert joint efforts to achieve a successful outcome of the Meeting.

**I thank you**