

Organization of American States

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Mr. President, let me take this opportunity to congratulate you on presiding over a very successful conference.

On this 25th anniversary of the Convention, we cannot help but reflect on the progress that has been achieved in the Americas. All but three State Parties in the Hemisphere have completed their obligations, with only Colombia, Ecuador and Peru with remaining commitments under the Convention; and as you have heard during this meeting, work is ongoing to meet their commitments. With the appropriate support, we are steadily moving toward ridding the Americas of anti-personnel mines.

The Organization of American States (OAS) is committed to providing support to member states so that they may reach their mine action goals as quickly as possible and ensure the desired impact at the level of affected communities. In doing so, we have placed a strong emphasis on the importance of close collaboration and partnership with affected member states, and on the creation of strategic partnerships with other organizations that support the development of specific skills and knowledge. It is vital that we all work together and use our resources as efficiently as possible if we are going to see movement forward.

In particular, I would like to emphasize the need to support effective Quality Management in this regard. This aspect of mine action is not only limited to personnel conducting quality control in minefields, but it is an overall framework which ensures that continual improvement of all mine action operations takes place. It is premised on the collection of key evidence and data, and on the maintenance of an information management system that can monitor performance and investigate areas where performance is weak. During this meeting, we have been challenged to do more and to do better during this meeting. Without engaging in a cooperative effort to improve the quality of our operations through measurement and analysis, we will not achieve this aim.

In addition, I would like to highlight the importance of continuing to push the boundaries with new techniques and technologies where possible. Once again, the testing and evaluation of new methodologies and tools – in particular related to areas such as remote sensing, the use of imagery for enhanced analysis through artificial intelligence and new detection methodologies – cannot be done in isolation. It must be the subject of collaborative efforts and financing so that we can move the markers forward. I would like to salute the contributions of both the ICRC and the GICHD in this regard. We look forward to working closely with partners on the integration of new and innovative solutions into mine action work.

This year, the OAS General Assembly once again passed a resolution committing OAS member states to strive towards achieving a Hemisphere free of anti-personnel mines. Ensuring that our collaboration is mutually reinforcing within a framework that uses resources wisely and based on analysis, is essential to achieving our aims. The OAS looks forward to enhancing our collaboration and partnerships on the path to our 2025 goals. We would like to thank mine action donors for their support and highlight the need to continue to enhance this collaboration as we move towards 2025.

Thank you.

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