



Federal Republic of Germany  
Foreign Office

**TWENTIETH MEETING**  
**TO THE CONVENTION ON THE PROHIBITION OF THE USE, STOCKPILING,**  
**PRODUCTION AND TRANSFER OF ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES AND ON THEIR**  
**DESTRUCTION**

Geneva, 21 – 25 November 2022

**Agenda item 8 - General exchange of views**

Mr. President,

On the outset, Germany wishes to thank you, Ambassador Ayala Melendez, for your commitment as President of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and for convening this meeting. I would like to assure you of the full cooperation and support of my delegation in this conference.

Germany also welcomes the impressive work done by the ISU in supporting States Parties in fulfilling their obligations under the Convention. We would finally also like to commend the members of the four Committees for their excellent work over the past period and for their efforts to advance the effective implementation of the Convention, and we welcome the new Committee members and assure them of our support in fulfilling their task.

Germany fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union. I would like to add some additional remarks in my national capacity.

Very soon, we will be looking back on 25 years of the Ottawa-Convention. This Convention is both, a ground-breaking disarmament treaty as well as a cornerstone of international humanitarian law. It is an indispensable instrument for our common fight against anti-personnel mines worldwide.

Germany remains a staunch supporter of the Ottawa-Convention and honors and faithfully performs its obligations under the convention. We are currently implementing measures to further decrease our stockpile for permitted purposes under the convention. Wherever possible, Germany already uses substitutes, for instance for training on detection of landmines.

Throughout the years we supported the Convention in many ways, recently serving in the committee for cooperation and assistance until 2021. Furthermore, Germany held chair of the mine action support group until a year ago during which the cooperation between donor countries and the system of the UN could be intensified.

Germany expresses its strong support towards all States Parties that are actively fulfilling their clearance obligations under this Convention. We thus have been providing substantial financial, technical and material assistance on a national level as well as through EU funding within the framework of this convention as well as related conventions and will continue to do so. This year alone, Germany will support humanitarian mine action with 50 million Euros, in contexts as diverse as South Sudan, Afghanistan and Cambodia. Cooperation and assistance extends in our view beyond financial support – more will follow during the session on cooperation and assistance later during this meeting. Sharing of experience as well as cooperation and mentoring can be equally significant.

At the same time, however, on a global level, hard work still lies ahead, in particular with regard to clearance operations. We have to note the slow pace of mine

clearances in some instances and consecutive extension requests. We appreciate the efforts of the Chair of the Article 5 Committee by submitting a working paper, which provides useful insights to further enhance the process for extension requests. The reduced pace of mine clearance efforts is partly due to the Covid-19-pandemic and we understand the challenges state parties face. Still, the level of ambition concerning concrete implementation steps needs to be increased. This needs to be done in a comprehensive manner, including all respective tools within and outside the convention. Ownership of the affected states parties and detailed, ambitious but realistic work plans are essential from our point of view.

Universality of the Convention is key to fulfil the aspiration of a world without anti-personal mines. We have come a long way towards universality. However, major producer and/or stockpile holders as well as users of anti-personnel mines are still outside of the Convention. They still need to commit to our common objective of a world free of anti-personal mines. We have to redouble our efforts, collectively and individually, and coordinate our approach to Universalization towards the Fifth Review Conference to bring additional states into the Convention. Germany will continue to do its share to reach this goal.

To build on this engagement and to support the further implementation of the Ottawa Convention, Germany has decided to seek the Presidency of the 21st Meeting of States Parties (21 MSP) of the Convention. We would appreciate your support and remain at your disposal for any further questions or enquiries.

Last week, Ireland hosted the adoption conference of the political declaration on the protection of civilians from the humanitarian consequences arising from the use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA). More than 80 States have endorsed this important step to the better protection of civilians through strengthened IHL. Germany would like to thank Ireland for their immense efforts and engagement

over the last years in steering the process. We hope that the declaration will be supported by the largest number of states possible and welcome broad participation in order to launch an effective, strong and inclusive follow-up process.

As we gather today, we are witnessing the devastating effects for civilians when IHL obligations are either not respected or even blatantly ignored: In its illegal war of aggression against Ukraine, Russian troops reportedly are directly or indiscriminately attacking civilians and civilian objects. The Russian use of anti-personnel mines, among other mines and explosive weapons, in its war of aggression causes civilian casualties and tremendous suffering and represent a clear step backwards.

Furthermore, anti-personnel landmines and other unexploded or abandoned ammunition left behind pose a long-lasting threat to civilians and hinder humanitarian access. We condemn this behavior in the strongest possible terms; obligations under IHL and international law have to be fully respected. We call on Russia to immediately put an end to the war it started, and end the tragic suffering and loss of life it continues to cause.

Germany welcomes the idea of a joint approach to support Ukraine in its post-conflict mine clearance efforts. Therefore, Germany is actively involved in donor coordination efforts, for example in the G7 context. Since February 2022, Germany has allocated around 9.4 million EUR to mine action in Ukraine. Projects include risk education, survey and clearance activities by humanitarian NGOs as well as capacity building and support to the mine clearance teams of the Ukrainian state emergency service. With this funding, organisations are also operating in recently liberated areas. Germany will continue to support humanitarian mine action in Ukraine.

Mr. President,

The Ottawa-Convention is a promise, the Convention is hope. It was meant to end the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personal mines. We have achieved a lot, but as Prince Mired underlined this morning: We must do more, we must do better. Let's start!

Thank you, Mr. President.