

**UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND
ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION – INTERSESSIONAL MEETING**

20-22 JUNE 2022

STATEMENT ON ARGENTINA EXTENSION REQUEST

Monday 20 June 15:00-18:00

Agenda item 4: Matters related to the mandate of the Committee on Article 5

Implementation

Thank you Mr President.

It will not surprise colleagues present that the United Kingdom has no doubt about its sovereignty over the Falkland Islands, nor about the Falkland Islanders' right of self-determination as enshrined in the UN Charter and the two UN Covenants on human rights, by virtue of which they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

Argentina's position on the Falklands is similarly well known here. However, these well-rehearsed positions are simply no longer relevant to this Convention. There cannot be a clearance obligation where there are no known or suspected minefields. The United Kingdom completed demining operations in the Islands in 2020. The clearance was conducted to the highest standards, utilising all the experience that the UK has developed in decades of leadership on the issue. Our completion report, submitted last year, set out our approach in detail, and should any state party wish to discuss our programme in more detail then I would be more than willing to do so. This is an offer that I have made in the past, and which has not been taken up.

Around the world people are being killed and maimed by landmines. Contaminated areas obstruct economic development, and isolate communities. The work of this Convention is real, and it is serious. That should be our focus, and I am confused and disappointed to see that Argentina appears to be more concerned with political games, and with minefields that no longer exist. I urge it to reconsider.