



European Union
Statement on Mine Clearance (Article 5)
Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
Intersessional Meeting

Mr. Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, the Republic of North Macedonia*, Montenegro* and Albania*, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, align themselves with this statement.

The European Union would like to thank the Committee for its work with regard to the implementation of Article 5 and related mine clearance actions of the Oslo Action Plan.

The EU remains committed to supporting mine clearance activities to help mine-affected States Parties meet their Article 5 obligations under the Convention. More than 87 million EUR of EU assistance for mine action was earmarked also for mine clearance in 2021 across 20 countries. Mine action is therefore critical to the peace and security agenda, humanitarian emergency response and sustainable development, and positively contributes to stabilization and sustaining peace.

The EU has also been engaged *inter alia* in a programme to safeguard conflict-affected communities exposed to risk and injury arising from explosive remnants of war contamination in Eastern Ukraine. This programme of safeguarding and mine clearance must be continued and extended to other parts of Ukraine affected by the Russian war of aggression and by use of anti-personnel mines.

*The Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

The EU would like to express its strong support towards the 32 States Parties that are making efforts to complete mine clearance operations, to the fullest extent possible by 2025, to bring us closer to the fulfilment of our shared goal of a world free of anti-personnel mines. Significant progress has been made in the implementation of the Oslo Action Plan in that regard, and we must redouble our efforts to meet the challenges that remain.

The EU wishes to recall that some improvised explosive devices fit the definition of an anti-personnel mine as they are “a mine designed to be exploded by the presence, proximity or contact of a person and that will incapacitate, injure or kill one or more persons” and therefore should be considered and reported as anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature. According to the latest 2021 edition of the Landmine Monitor, anti-personnel mines of improvised nature have been deployed by non-State armed groups in Afghanistan, Colombia, India, Myanmar, Nigeria and Pakistan.

The EU considers it important to continue raising awareness of the obligation of States Parties to address this type of contamination within the framework of the Convention and to report the use of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature.

Mr. Chair,

Over the course of the Convention’s history, we have witnessed an increase in repeated extensions, missed deadlines, delayed implementation and non-implementation of commitments. The EU reminds all States that Article 5 requests should be considered an exceptional measure, and to make every effort to complete their obligations under the Treaty in full and on time. The EU acknowledges and values the effort and commitment in that regard by many States. As set out in Actions 23 and 24 of the Oslo Action Plan, extension requests should contain detailed, costed and multi-year work plans for the extension period and plans for context-specific mine risk education and reduction in affected communities. Providing such detail gives States Parties confidence that the extension request is realistic and implementable. The failure to implement clearance obligations under the Convention and to regularly communicate progress has significant humanitarian and socio-economic impacts. Also in the context of the consideration of the activities of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation, EU welcomes the commitment of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation, to continue

strengthening the Article 5 extension request process and adherence to the relevant actions of the Oslo Action Plan, including by drawing on input from all relevant stakeholders.

The EU would like to once again urge Eritrea to draw upon the resources of the Implementation Support Unit and the guidance of the Article 5 committee to develop its request for extension to be in compliance with the Convention and to submit an Article 7 Report without further delay.

The EU considers low reporting rates as an issue of concern that must be improved. The actions regarding reporting, as foreseen in the Convention, and decided by the States Parties during Review Conferences, as well as on a voluntary basis, as encouraged during Meetings of States Parties, require more focused attention. The EU calls for increased reporting rates as well as for an innovative, coordinated approach and a comprehensive program aiming at advocating, assisting and promoting the reporting under the mandate of the President.

We realize that there is a clear need for strengthened cooperation, assistance and mobilization of resources towards achieving the goal of a mine free world. The lack of financial resources is the main challenge, and the EU calls upon all actors, public or private, to collectively explore options possible for new and alternative sources of funding.

Thank you, Mr. Chair