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## Draft Statement by Ambassador Stefano Toscano, GICHD Director

### Intersessional Meetings of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, Agenda item N°7 “Matters related to the mandate of the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance”, WIPO, 20 June 2022

Mr. President,

International Cooperation and Assistance is a key commitment in the APMBC. While the primary responsibility for Convention implementation rests with affected States, these are not alone and we all have a responsibility to support them in their efforts if they so request. Actions #42 to #47 of the Oslo Action Plan provide a concrete framework to ensure that international cooperation and assistance support affected States towards fulfilling their obligations as soon as possible. We must all endeavor to turn these actions into reality on the ground.

International Cooperation and Assistance should be seen as a means by which all relevant stakeholders can join forces to promote the well-known ingredients of a successful mine action programme: strong national ownership; sustainable local capacities; sound and inclusive strategic planning; effective operations supported by the latest standards, methods and tools; as well as long-term and predictable funding. For these ingredients to be effectively used, we also need a good understanding of the specific challenges faced by any given affected State and population, and a clear overview and coordination of all the actors involved and the type of support they are providing.

To this end, the individualized approach promoted within the Convention, of which the GICHD is a strong supporter, is more than welcome. We are seeing this again this week: the individualized approach meetings organized for Cambodia, Chad and Guinea Bissau on the margins of these meetings have been excellent opportunities to bring together the respective national authorities and key stakeholders active in these countries and lay the groundwork for support to accelerate efforts to meet the Convention's obligations.

These meetings are indeed concrete examples of a platform that provides a conducive space and a leading role to affected states to present the situation in their respective country, and that relies on dialogue to ensure that momentum is kept and that all actors involved share information on their role in the interest of ensuring better coordination and identifying remaining needs. While these individualized approach meetings have real added value in the work of the APMBC, it is in our view also important, as far as possible, to ensure their follow-up over time within the framework of the Convention and at field level.

Mr. President,

International and Cooperation Assistance can play a key role for those States Parties that are close to completion. The mine action sector rightly invests a lot of time and resources in

supporting countries and territories in which contamination levels are significant or where there is an urgent humanitarian need to mitigate the impacts of explosive ordnance. While this engagement is necessary, we must continue to support countries for whom the conditions are met to fulfil the obligations of the Convention in the short term and whose progress is sometimes held back because their situation is, if I may say so, no longer a priority for the international community.

We must therefore revive the momentum around these countries and adequately support those States that are a few steps away from completion and still need a final push to meet their obligations. In this context, the notion of good donorship will be key and we would encourage interested donor countries and relevant affected States to join forces in these final stages. The individualized approach can be an ideal configuration for this.

Thank you.