

**BELGIUM**

**Cooperation and assistance**

**APMBC – 21<sup>st</sup> MSP - November 2023**

Belgium aligns itself with the EU declaration and wishes to make the following comments in its national capacity.

Mister Chair,

Please allow me to congratulate you for your hard work and fine stewardship and assure you of the continued cooperation of my delegation.

The use of antipersonnel mines affects women and men, girls and boys, differently.

Taking into account differences between men and women and how the presence of mines and explosive remnants impacts their lives helps prevent casualties and provide an appropriate response for survivors. The deployment of female deminers and the integration of women into decision making structures show local communities how gender barriers can be broken for the benefit of the whole community.

For no one to be left behind, accurate understanding of local and socio-cultural and economic contexts, access to accurate gender disaggregated data and robust gender and conflict sensitivity analysis is paramount.

So is meaningful participation of women, men, girls and boys and giving them a forum where they can be heard. We need to really listen and to exchange good practices and lessons learned and to bring all different perspectives together.

Belgium wants to reiterate its full support and engagement to the efforts needed to advance gender equality through the integration of a gender and diversity perspective into Mine Action, over the whole scope of Mine Action activities as well as throughout the whole activity cycle.

Belgium continues its support to the mine action programs of UNMAS in Syria and Iraq, where gender mainstreaming and developing local capacities lie at the center. NGO's operating in Cambodia, Angola, Syria, and the Sahel also received grants. Other financing passes through Country-Based Pooled, as well as to the Central Emergency and Response Fund.

We have also given in kind assistance to Ukraine in the form of land- and underwater demining equipment and training.

Let's all continue to work together for more humanity!

Thank you.