

## STATEMENT OF ETHIOPIA ON ENHANCEMENT OF COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE

### 21 MSP TO THE ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION

20-24 NOVEMBER 2023

Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me begin by congratulating the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance for their exceptional leadership. As we approach the turning point of the Ethiopian mine action sector, we acknowledge the significant achievements made over the past 20 years while recognizing the challenges we face in fulfilling our obligations under the Convention and the Oslo Declaration.

Since our accession to the convention in 2005, the Federal Government of Ethiopia has been the major single contributor to the mine action sector. In 2023, the international donor community generously contributed around US \$4.5 million to the mine action sector in Ethiopia. This support has enabled us to provide risk education to approximately 200,000 individuals, primarily children who were exposed to danger. Also, in the same year, the Government of Ethiopia contributed 5 million Ethiopian Birr which equates to nearly 100,000 USD to support operational running costs and rapid response activities. With the total number of people in need of mine action intervention reaching 10 million, the focus is on releasing and clearing land for agriculture, settlement, and access. As such this urgent life-saving task requires more funding.

Moreover, we have also actively participated in knowledge sharing and cooperation, and conducted training, in various mine action events, fostering a stronger spirit of cooperation among different country programs. Notably, Ethiopia has recently participated in the regional workshop organized by Japan in Nairobi, Kenya. The workshop aims to enhance regional cooperation including cross-border operations, national ownership, and lessons learned to maximize the links between Humanitarian, Development, and Peace Nexus.

The contributions of international donors have played a critical role in the development of mine action programs across different areas, including the Somali and Tigray regions. Furthermore, to contribute to global peace, Ethiopia has been at the forefront of sending peacekeepers to nations in need. In collaboration with the National Peacekeeping

Center, the Ethiopia Mine Action Office has been closely working to train and deploy specialized demining personnel. As a result, Ethiopia currently stands as the second-largest troop-contributing country to UN peacekeeping missions, and when accounting for our involvement in African Union peacekeeping missions, we are the largest contributor of peacekeeping troops worldwide. With good support of international donors including the Government of Norway, a well-designed training center has been built in the capital city, Addis Ababa. With its strong peacekeeping experience, Ethiopia aspires to establish the facility as a regional mine action center of excellence that can benefit the neighboring mine-affected countries. I believe a regional approach is needed to address a common problem.

Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

With the support received from our esteemed development partners, the Federal Republic of Ethiopia is committed to creating a permissive environment, as such your support to mine action operations is utilized effectively and efficiently. With this background, Ethiopia requires a budget of 45 million US dollars to assess and clear the legacy threat of explosive ordnances. To fulfill our commitment to the Oslo Declaration and identify all known hazardous areas, at least 50% of this amount needs to be secured from now until the end of 2024. A further 10% of the fund is also required to establish the National Mine Action Office to ensure effective and efficient management of the sector. The funding gap is substantial and poses a significant challenge to our goal of achieving a mine-free status. Consequently, I appeal to the Implementation Support Unit and the States Parties to provide continued and additional support to address this funding shortfall.

Finally, I would like to mention that Ethiopia is preparing to develop the National Mine Action Strategy with the Support of GICHD and UNMAS. Recently communication has been established with GICHD. In addition, the accreditation process for International Organizations has begun, while documentation of Humanity and Inclusion (HI), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Danish Church Aid (DCA), and BBC Media Action is already under review. Meanwhile, the Halo Trust has resumed working with operational accreditation planned in due course. Our esteemed office is also in discussion with the relevant channel to ensure that the Mines Advisory Group (MAG) application is submitted in a timely manner.

Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Federal Government of Ethiopia, I express my deepest gratitude to all stakeholders who have supported and continue to support mine action in Ethiopia. Your assistance is invaluable, and together, we can make a lasting impact on the lives of affected communities.

Thank you.