



**Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention  
21<sup>st</sup> Meeting of States Parties  
November 2023  
Statement by The HALO Trust  
International Cooperation and Assistance**

*Check against delivery.*

Thank you, President.

I would like to congratulate you and Germany on your Presidency and thank you for your work during the last year.

It is great to see the advances that have been made and we particularly welcomed the two cross-cutting themes you have chosen to focus on during your Presidency, gender and diversity and the environment – both are of importance to HALO. We look forward to building on your important work in the coming year as we approach the Fifth Review Conference in Cambodia.

Since the adoption of the Oslo Action Plan in 2019, the sector has witnessed an increased use of landmines, both in long-standing and new conflicts, alongside with an ever-widening funding gap. This poses great challenges and it is important that we do not lose momentum and continue to support affected states and territories, especially those which are not at the forefront of the news. We need to balance emergencies with long-standing commitments.

However, in the last four years, we have also seen the strengthening of gender and diversity mainstreaming in line with Action 3, increasing integration of environmental and climate change considerations, and growing scale and quality of clearance outputs, as monitored by the Mine Action Review. We also welcome advances in innovative financing, in line with Action 27.

As we look towards the Fifth Review Conference in Cambodia next year and the adoption of the Siem Reap Action Plan, I would like to outline four key interconnected themes, HALO considers of utmost importance:

First, on planning beyond the 2025 deadline: In Maputo in 2014, the target was set to strive to complete global mine clearance by 2025. Although renewed commitment was made in Oslo five years later, most affected States will fall short. Therefore, a more tailored approach is needed when new deadlines and targets are agreed, taking local contexts into consideration. Incentives also remain vital for affected States Parties to achieve Article 5 obligations and we welcome the

discussions around the Extension Request Process Paper submitted by the Committee on Article 5 Implementation.

Second, on environmental and climate change considerations: The climate emergency is real and my colleagues in HALO's programmes in the Horn of Africa, Afghanistan and many other places are impacted by its effects, such as draughts and floods. This is why States Parties and operators have prioritised the increased integration of environmental and climate change considerations in their programming and strategies. The Fifth Review Conference should therefore result in a commitment to actions and meaningful indicators on environment. We welcome the increased focus on environmental issues in mine action and fully align with the statement delivered by NPA on Integrating Environmental Considerations into the Implementation of the Convention.

Third, on gender and diversity mainstreaming: Great advances have been made in line with Action 3 of the Oslo Action Plan. However, challenges remain in some affected States. Therefore, we seek to strengthen the current commitment and build on the norms and practice that have grown from strength to strength since the adoption of the Oslo Action Plan. We fully align with the statement delivered by the Gender and Diversity Working Group, of which HALO is an active member and former Co-Chair.

Fourth and lastly, on increasing traditional and innovative funding sources for the Mine Action sector: As outlined by the Landmine Monitor, in 2022, global funding for mine action totalled over US\$ 900 million, representing an increase of 52 per cent from 2021. International donor funding increased, addressing a decline against inflation, and over US\$ 160m went to activities in Ukraine. This shows that current crises have brought new funding, but we continue to see neglect of 'forgotten crises' and countries which, with a little increase in funding, could reach the finish line in a relatively short period of time. Therefore, coordination of traditional funding and new partnerships and innovative solutions, including the private sector, must be a priority for the sector to support affected countries and territories.

I would like to finish by stating that HALO looks forward to work with all stakeholders involved in this crucial year ahead of us to ensure that the Review Conference includes strong and meaningful commitments, actions and indicators to equip us well for the years ahead.

Thank you.