

OPENING STATEMENT

Mr. President,

Canada would like to thank you for Germany's strong leadership as APMBC President for this past year, which included overseeing the Convention's 25th anniversary. As always, my delegation wishes to extend our sincere thanks to the ISU for its hard work across all aspects of the Convention.

Mr. President,

These are indeed challenging times for our Convention. The rise in conflicts around the world has marked an increase in the use of landmines causing an even greater number of civilian victims and causing much harm from a humanitarian perspective. This rise in the use of landmines comes at a time where our Convention is experiencing a drought in new States parties joining. We are also seeing a rise in donor fatigue, and important questions are being raised about the efficiency for requesting extensions for mine clearance. Non-compliance with reporting obligations also continues to harm the Convention. Though we all agreed in Oslo on a mine free world by 2025, from our perspective today in light of these challenges, we know that meeting this objective will be elusive.

Mr. President,

We are concerned in light of the mounting challenges before us. Despite this, we must remain focused on the fact that this is one of the most universalized disarmament Conventions, and that it really does indeed save lives. Accordingly, Canada remains supportive and fully committed to this Convention and all of its articles. We must remain focused and committed to the spirit that brought us together in Oslo for the Fourth Review Conference, and indeed here today: that the use of anti-personnel landmines is illegal and that these repugnant weapons must be removed for once and for all.

My delegation firmly believes in the importance of our collective approach to mine action, and that it remains crucial for us to address the nexus of security, development and humanitarian impacts of landmines. This includes a laser focus on national ownership, impacts on livelihood, alleviating poverty, food security and protection of civilians. This, as we see it, is the only way for mine action to be effective and sustainable.

Canada was pleased to hear a response from the Ukrainian delegation last June at the APMBC intersessional regarding the allegations of the use of landmines by the Ukrainian armed forces. At that time, the delegation informed the convention that it was taking the issue very seriously and that a full investigation would be forthcoming.

My delegation would be interested in hearing if there were any additional updates since June that the delegation from Ukraine could provide us.

We, like others, note that in the current conflict, the RF have disproportionately used landmines in Ukraine and that we would not

have this discussion had the RF not illegally invaded Ukraine. Canada stands with Ukraine.

Mr. President,

This week's meeting is particularly important as we turn our attention to 2024, the year of our next RevCon. Canada wishes once again to congratulate Cambodia for taking on the Presidency of our Convention's RevCon, and wishes Cambodia all the success in their preparations. Rest assured that my delegation will do all it can to support Cambodia's presidency.

Finally Mr. President,

We wish to acknowledge the presence and on-going valuable contributions of civil society, academics and International Organizations to our discussions this week. We find it regrettable that in other forums, their presence is questioned in the room. My delegation reiterates the importance of inclusive and diverse participation, including the equal, full and meaningful participation of women in this Convention's work. Indeed, a gender-responsive approach enriches and strengthens our shared endeavours to more sustainably and concretely end the use of landmines. We commend our non-governmental partners on their input and call on them to continue to push us all towards our common objective of a world free of landmines.

I thank you.