



**Eighth Pledging Conference for the Implementation of the Anti-Personnel  
Mine Ban Convention  
Geneva, 24 March 2023  
EU Statement**

Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The candidate countries Türkiye, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Ukraine, Republic of Moldova, and Bosnia and Herzegovina<sup>1</sup> align themselves with this statement.

At the outset, we would like to congratulate you Mr. Chair on assuming the Presidency of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention for 2023. We look forward to working with you closely. You can count on our full support.

The European Union welcomes this eighth consecutive Pledging Conference and hopes to see a successful mobilization towards the effective implementation of this Convention and, more generally, towards the sustainable financing of humanitarian mine action. The EU continues to be fully committed to strengthen the ban against anti-personnel mines and to achieve a world free of anti-personnel mines, and free of any new victims.

The long-standing history of the commitment of the EU and EU Member States to humanitarian demining is reflected in our support for mine action that benefits nearly all heavily mine-affected countries and regions of the world. It is also reflected in contribution of over 800 million EURO to humanitarian mine action over the past 6 years. The assistance provided by the EU in 2022 amounted up to 90 million EURO, contributing to various programmes in 20 mine affected countries, such as the recent projects in Armenia and Azerbaijan (risk education, victim assistance and mine clearance), Colombia (mine clearance and rehabilitation of former combatants), Libya, Somalia, Ukraine and Yemen. An additional programme of up to 25 million EURO to support Ukraine's de-mining of the liberated territories temporarily occupied by Russian armed forces was recently announced by the EU.

The EU remains fully committed to fund mine action and has been over past few years supporting national stakeholder dialogues in places like Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iraq,

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<sup>1</sup> North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

Senegal, South Sudan and Uganda so that all parties responsible for the wellbeing of mine-affected communities and survivors can better address the challenges they face through strengthened dialogue and partnerships. We work with assistance organizations and national authorities in affected countries to use available resources effectively and to contribute to integrating victim assistance into broader disability and development policies at the national level.

Mr. President,

The Council Decision CFSP/2021/257 in support of the Oslo Action Plan, adopted on February 18, 2021 provides over 2.6 million EURO for an extended period of 4 years with the objective to contribute to the full implementation of the Oslo Action Plan and its concrete actions. The EU Council Decision carries out a variety of universalization efforts under the President's mandate. These include supporting high-level missions with the Convention's two Special Envoys. Since the last Pledging Conference they met with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Viet Nam and the Marshall Islands to promote Convention universalization and with Eritrea to further encourage the State to return to compliance. Under the project, the Implementation Support Unit recently offered also a follow up support to Colombia to host a workshop on victim assistance and supported Zimbabwe and Sudan via national and/or regional stakeholders dialogues. We are also pleased to announce that the Third Global Conference on Victim Assistance and the Rights of Mine Survivors will take place in Phnom Penh in Cambodia from 17 to 19 October.

The European Union understands that with the project, the small ISU team is taking on an increased workload. Therefore, the EU provides the ISU with the necessary funds for a Project and Communication Manager. In this regard, we wish to thank the Director of the ISU and his excellent team for the exemplary implementation of the EU project and we will continue to support the ISU in its endeavours.

Mr. President,

The 8th Pledging Conference provides an opportunity to renew and strengthen our collective commitment to the comprehensive prohibition of anti-personnel mines, towards the goal of a mine-free world by 2025, and to enhance cooperation and assistance for mine action. The Meeting of State Parties held in November last year testified the progress was made by mine-affected countries to fulfil their demining obligations, to identify remaining and emerging challenges, and to assist victims. This momentum must be maintained.

In conclusion, we want to take this opportunity to once again encourage all States Parties to contribute to mine action, including to the work of the Implementation Support Unit, which is critical to the functioning of the Convention.

Thank you.