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Statement by Ambassador Stefano Toscano, GICHD Director

Eighth Annual Pledging Conference for the Implementation of the
APMBC | 24 March 2023

Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you on your election as President of the 21st Meeting of the States Parties of the APMBC. I would also like to thank you for welcoming us to this Eighth Annual Pledging Conference and Minister Keul for her remarks.

The GICHD welcomes the longstanding and productive cooperation with Germany, and we look forward to working with you throughout the year.

Being a privileged witness of the critical role of the ISU in APMBC implementation, we would like to extend our gratitude and appreciation to Juan Carlos and his team for the remarkable work they do.

For many years now, the GICHD has been supporting the Convention's machinery, particularly its Implementation Support Unit. In agreement with the States Parties of the Convention, and thanks to the support from Switzerland, the Centre continues to host the ISU, providing it with office space, logistical and administrative support, thus contributing to the efficient work of the Convention.

Our fruitful cooperation with and support to the ISU and the Convention's machinery goes well beyond logistical and administrative aspects. Let me highlight a few examples:

- In 2022, the GICHD provided comments to art. 5 extension requests submitted by Serbia, Sudan, Thailand, Yemen. Such support is planned for the extension requests to be submitted in 2023.

- The GICHD also participated in the National Stakeholder Dialogue on the Comprehensive action against Antipersonnel Mines in Colombia, aiming to support the elaboration of the updated Operational Plan of Colombia for the period 2023-2025. The ISU supported the organisation of this Dialogue. The GICHD delivered a thematic presentation on the implementation of the Triple Nexus Approach in Colombia.
- In 2023, the GICHD also participated in the National Stakeholder Dialogue for a Mine-Free Zimbabwe by 2025, funded by the European Union and co-organised by the Government of Zimbabwe and the ISU. This event saw the launch of Zimbabwe's reviewed National Mine Action Strategy and updated Communications and Resource Mobilisation Strategy 2018- 2025, which were developed with the support of the GICHD.
- Last year, the Centre facilitated a strategy stakeholder workshop in Sri Lanka to develop a Theory of Change for 2023-2027 as a basis for developing Sri Lanka's new national mine action strategy. The ISU participated in the discussions during the workshop with inputs on victim assistance.
- Finally, and for several years, the Centre has participated in the APMBC Coordinating Committee, actively contributing to its work in support of the Convention. Moreover, the Centre is a founding and active member of the informal Gender and Diversity Working Group and supports States Parties and the Gender Focal Points of the APMBC Coordinating Committee in the implementation of the gender and diversity related actions of the Oslo Action Plan.

Mr. President,

The Convention's machinery and the ISU's work are paramount to guiding our collective efforts towards the implementation of the Convention and the Oslo Action Plan. The GICHD is determined to continue its contribution to these collective efforts, working closely with the Presidency, the ISU, the States Parties, operators, and civil society.

Thank you.