

**NPA Statement on  
4. Matters Related to the Mandate of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation  
Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Intersessional Meetings  
Geneva, 19 June 2023**

**Delivered by Kristina Duric, Senior Policy Advisor**

Thank you Chair,

As this is the first time my delegation is taking the floor, please allow me to thank you and the Committee Members, as well as the ISU for your continuous efforts towards Article 5 Implementation.

During the 20MSP in November we stated that only 5 out of the 34 States Parties with mined areas were on track or barely on track to meet their Article 5 deadlines, as per Mine Action Review analysis. Seven months later, we are disappointed to state that this number is coming closer to zero every day. Please take a moment to reflect on this, as if this trend continues, it will not be long before being on track would be a rare exception rather than the norm that it should be. Understanding that affected states parties have the primary obligation to fulfill their commitments under this Convention, including completion, this also requires our joint effort, as remarked by Ambassador Gobel in his opening remarks this morning, we must work together. Each stakeholder present here today has a responsibility to do their part and support the affected State Parties cross the finish line.

Ongoing conflicts and humanitarian crises must have urgent priority, but protracted contamination from conflicts long over must not be forgotten. It is unfortunate that what we witness with the longevity of the Convention, and longevity of contamination, is affected States Parties being left on their own. While there may be a complexity of factors influencing such trend, the fact is that this trend exists. This Convention can only be fully implemented if sufficient clearance efforts and resources are aimed at both recent and old contamination.

We must yet again raise the case of Zimbabwe. A state which has done everything by the book from their end, with a committed national authority, clear national mine action strategy, ready to complete its clearance obligations under this Convention, and last time we made a statement seven months ago, just on track to do so, but today still in need of sufficient funding to reach its clearance target. The risk of prolongation of Zimbabwe's completion has been entirely avoidable. We should not hesitate until the last minute to rally the necessary support and enable the affected States Parties to complete their clearance. We must learn from this, act faster and with intent.

To meet Article 5 obligations, we need concrete actions. Forming National Mine Action Platforms is a proven way of successful cooperation towards timely completion. We hereby encourage all affected States Parties present to establish National Mine Action Platforms aimed at completion, bringing together all relevant stakeholders around the same goal. The effort toward completion, as any effort toward fulfilling the Convention's obligations, must be inclusive and endorse the commitments to gender and diversity made in the Oslo Action Plan as well as take environmental concerns into account to secure not

only timely, but meaningful and responsible fulfillment of the clearance obligations, without leaving anyone behind.

Finally, as the coming years will witness a large number of Article 5 extension requests being submitted, we as an operator are interested to hear about the continuing discussions around strengthening the Article 5 extension request process. With Capacity Development and assistance to national authorities being at the core of NPA's approach to supporting meaningful implementation of the Convention, I would like to underline that NPA stands ready to support States Parties submitting their extension requests ahead of the time, during the development of their requests, rather than only once they are submitted.

We also align ourselves with the statement of the Mine Action Review, of which we are an Advisory Board Member.

Thank you.