

National statement

Time limit: Five minutes

Thank you, President.

Please allow me to extend my delegation's sincere appreciation to you and your team for hosting this Review Conference and welcoming us to Cambodia. You have our full support.

We recognise that we are meeting today in a country heavily affected by mines, and still dealing with the impacts of these weapons decades later.

President, as well as celebrating 25 years of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, or Mine Ban Treaty, this Review Conference offers us the opportunity to reflect on the successes of our collective efforts, including the impressive results achieved in Cambodia, and to make clear plans to continue this momentum towards a mine free world.

New Zealand remains strongly committed to the Mine Ban Treaty. The defence of international humanitarian law, and the protection of civilians are priorities in New Zealand's Disarmament and Arms Control Strategy. The humanitarian disarmament norms we have built over decades, including with non-States Parties to this Convention, have saved countless lives, but there is much more to be done.

We observe with deep concern Russia's extensive use of anti-personnel mines in Ukraine, which are a humanitarian, ecological, and economic catastrophe. We have been consistent in our unequivocal condemnation of Russia. Moreover, we have reminded Russia of its obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law. New Zealand strongly supports Ukraine's right to defend itself against Russia's illegal war of aggression.

This unequivocal condemnation of Russia's aggression and our enduring support for Ukraine's self-defence do not change the fact that use or acquisition of anti-personnel mines by Ukraine would breach its obligations under this Convention.

New Zealand is also deeply troubled by the United States' announcement that it intends to transfer anti-personnel mines to Ukraine, a State Party to this Convention. We call on the US to respect the Convention's prohibitions, as we expect of all non-States Parties to this treaty.

We call on all States to comply with their obligations under the Convention and support the effective functioning of the Treaty's mechanisms. Our efforts, including through the outcome documents from this Conference, will send a strong signal about the strength of the Treaty, and the norms it codifies, to those States not yet Party. We urge all States that have not yet done so to accede without delay, and to consign these indiscriminate weapons to history.

President, we again put on record our appreciation for the tireless work of the mine action sector, including civil society, representatives of affected communities and survivors, governments, or international organisations. The majority of casualties from mines and explosive remnants of war continue to be civilians, including children. The voices and advocacy of affected communities and survivors were central to the development of the Convention and the norms it established, and this remains essential in all our discussions.

New Zealand is committed to supporting mine action around the world, including mine risk education, victim assistance, survey and clearance in Southeast Asia, South America, the Middle East, and in Ukraine.

As we face increasing conflict around the world, and new and continued anti-personnel mine use, we call on all States to not neglect dealing with legacy contamination. The Landmine Monitor has reported that global support for mine action surpassed \$1 billion in 2023. This is a milestone to be celebrated, while acknowledging the conflict and humanitarian need that has necessitated it.

We also emphasise the importance of international cooperation and national plans focusing on all pillars of mine action: clearance, mine risk education, victim assistance, advocacy and stockpile destruction.

In closing, President, New Zealand renews our deep commitment to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention at all levels. While we celebrate the successes of the past 25 years and consider the new challenges we face today, we will not lose sight of our ultimate goal of a mine-free world.

Thank you.