

High-level segment 25 November 2024

Statement by Norway Deputy Foreign Minister Andreas Kravik

#### RENEWING POLITICAL COMMITMENT TO THE CONVENTION

- I am honoured to be here and to share Norway's commitment to the Mine Ban Convention with the Presidency and the larger Convention family of member states, civil society and observers. I would like to pay a special tribute to the many survivors and representatives of victims' associations present here today.
- Mr. President, it has been an honour to work closely with you and the rest of the Cambodian presidency team for the 5<sup>th</sup> Review Conference. Cambodia was the very first country where Norway started funding clearance of mines in 1992. The terrible legacy of anti-personnel mines in Cambodia, in terms of high casualty rates and socioeconomic impact on communities, are felt until this day. Massive clearance has taken place over decades, and Cambodia is a prime example of what can be achieved where mine action policy is a clear national priority. My delegation (and I) were left with strong impressions during our visit to the Peace Museum of Mine Action yesterday.
- This Conference will adopt a new action plan to guide implementation of all the obligations of the Convention for the next five years. It will also adopt a political declaration to reaffirm the commitment of all states parties. This year, 25 years after the entry into force of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty, we reaffirm our commitment to a ban on weapons which kill and maim indiscriminately. We reaffirm that we adhere to international humanitarian law and to a common set of values. The norm established by the Mine Ban Convention against any use is more relevant than ever.
- The role of action Plans is to provide new energy and direction to the implementation of this convention. Norway will actively contribute to a strong outcome this week, and to build further on the Oslo Action Plan adopted five years ago. In Oslo, we agreed to highlight best practice, and we introduced indicators to measure progress. We focused on progress in clearance of landmines, addressed the use of landmines of an improvised nature, highlighted the need for mine risk education and prevention measures for at-risk populations, and affirmed the integration of a gender perspective in all aspects of mine action.
- Mr President, we believe that the Oslo Action Plan has in fact had a positive impact on mainstreaming gender equality and inclusion of the diverse needs and experiences of affected

populations, and we look forward to carrying this work forward in the Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan.

- This Convention has established a strong norm against any use of anti-personnel landmines. As states parties, we condemn the use of anti-personnel landmines by any actor. Norway expects all States Parties to comply with their legal obligations under the Convention. Any use or transfer by States not party to the Convention does not diminish or revoke the obligation of States Parties to uphold their commitments.
- Let us remember that the ban on use is adhered to by many more countries than the States Parties alone. We see this in the voting pattern for the annual UN resolution on the implementation of the Convention, which receives strong support every year.
- I need not remind you that many established norms and rules of warfare are currently being challenged by a lack of compliance with international humanitarian law. This is unacceptable. Norway has consistently called out against double standards.
- The Mine Ban Convention was adopted to address the need to *protect* people from weapons that continue to kill and injure long after a conflict has ended. Any mines or explosive devices that are designed to be detonated by a person fall under this Convention and are banned. It does not matter **how** they are produced, or **why** they are used.
- The protection dimension of the Mine Ban Convention has been fundamental to Norway since the beginning. We have not forgotten the rallying cry from Maputo in 2014: “a mine-free world by 2025”. A mine-free world remains our common objective. At the same time, a mine-free world does not mean a world without landmine victims and survivors. This convention recognises the rights of victims and survivors. This means access to health services, education, and employment in their communities.
- Mr President, the Mine Ban Convention sets clear deadlines for clearance, and all member states have a responsibility to help those affected. 58 countries and 2 other areas remain contaminated by landmines. 36 of these are party to this convention. 94% of all anti-personnel mines cleared in the world last year took place in countries which are states parties to this convention.
- Funding for mine action is required, but **funding** on its own is not enough. We also need *policies and national commitment*. We need an accurate picture of the extent of contamination, and we urge all governments in affected countries to intensify their efforts in this area.
- Norway has supported mine action for more than 30 years and is one of the top five donors for global mine action. We are currently funding mine action in 20 countries and areas, in

partnership with humanitarian NGOs. In many affected states, landmine contamination is low or modest, and with the right commitment and resources, clearance could be completed within months or a few years. Far more experience, technological advances and improved methods are available to the mine action sector today than was the case when the Mine Ban Convention was first adopted in Oslo in 1997.

- A handful of donors contributed 72% of all international funding for global mine action in 2023. There is considerable opportunity for other state parties to the Mine Ban Convention to contribute to help speed up the pace of clearance. Norway supports innovative funding mechanisms, including the establishment of a fund to support mine action in countries that are on the right track to completion, but receive little or no funding.
- Let me close by assuring you, Mr. President, of Norway's continued commitment to the norm established by the Mine Ban Convention and to support for affected countries to cross the finishing line.

I thank you.