



Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention 5th Review Conference

November 2024

Statement on Afghanistan Article 5 Extension Request

Mr. President, as this is the first time The HALO Trust is taking the floor, I would like to congratulate you on your Presidency, and thank you and your team for your tireless efforts during the last year. Coming together for the Fifth Review Conference here in Siem Reap is a truly special occasion, and we are grateful to you and the ISU.

Afghanistan faces one of the most severe landmine crises in the world, with four million people living daily under the threat of landmines and other explosive remnants of war. These hazards not only endanger lives but also restrict access to homes, schools, and farmland, exacerbating an already critical humanitarian situation. According to Mine Action Review, Afghanistan's contamination is quantified as "massive" as has been the case since such tracking measures were first adopted in 2016.

Since 1988, HALO's operations in Afghanistan have contributed to the clearance of over 1,375 square kilometers of land contaminated with mines, UXO, and IEDs—approximately 20,000 football pitches. However, substantial areas remain uncleared, and a nationwide survey is required to fully understand the extent of contamination.

The most recent Landmine Monitor report highlights a 60 per cent reduction in mine action funding for Afghanistan in 2023. This significant decrease threatens to undermine progress and risks Afghanistan becoming a forgotten crisis. Long-term and predictable funding is critical to sustaining clearance efforts and ensuring compliance with the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention.



Mr. President, Afghanistan's extension request under Article 5 is supported by substantial data and demonstrates its commitment to meeting its obligations. If Afghanistan remains compliant, it will not only achieve critical humanitarian outcomes but also strengthen the Convention itself.

Constructive engagement with all stakeholders is essential to maintaining this progress. Sustained international support for mine action in Afghanistan is key to saving lives, restoring livelihoods, and strengthening global commitments under the Convention. We encourage the international community to grant this extension request.

Thank you.