



**NPA Statement on Agenda Item 8(a): Universalisation
Fifth Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
Siem Reap-Angkor, 25-29 November 2024**

**Delivered by
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Thank you Mr. President,

The APMBC has a proud history as being one of the strongest and most successful humanitarian disarmament treaties, and its success lies in its ability to gather a great number of states, operators and the civil society to work together towards the commitments made to implement the Treaty provisions.

Universalization matters for two main reasons. First, it benefits all of us to be part of a rule-based international system founded on a humanitarian framework, where the value of norms and rules protecting civilians is universally recognized. This applies to all conventions and the international system we, as a society, have created, and it must be protected and upheld to remain relevant. Second, being part of a convention such as APMBC with its clear goals and commitments by States Parties to support one another, ensures that this framework will provide the support State Parties need to fulfil their obligations.

The Treaty established a strong global norm against anti-personnel mines; by stigmatizing and delegitimizing these weapons. As we all know, it is illegal for a State Party to use anti-personnel mines under any circumstance. The news regarding the US transfer of anti-personnel mines to State Party Ukraine, poses the greatest threat in the 25-year history of the Convention. How States Parties respond to this threat to our treaty matters both now in the Ukraine context and also for the future of the convention and the norm against use of mines. It is imperative for States Parties to defend the Convention and urge Ukraine not to accept the transfer or to use anti-personnel mines. The US should reverse its decision to transfer anti-personnel mines to Ukraine, a deplorable decision which also goes against its own policy. States Parties should join Austria, Ireland, Mexico and New Zealand in speaking on this issue and defending compliance with the Treaty.

In the context of current global challenges, there is a pressing need for more states to take a clear stand in support of a rule-based order, humanitarian principles, and international humanitarian law, including the APMBC. We are therefore pleased to hear and welcome the announcement made by Tonga today on its plans to join to the Treaty and we strongly support universalization initiatives leading to the global acceptance of the Convention and its norms that are essential to the protection of civilians.

Additionally, we see how some States Parties, despite doing everything possible in line with their obligations, still lack the necessary support to meet their commitments fully. This also signals to affected states not yet party, particularly those not facing humanitarian emergencies or those with no means to address the contamination themselves, that there is little to gain by joining the Convention. States Parties should demonstrate stronger focus on addressing this issue. The solution lies in establishing a voluntary trust fund under this convention that aims at supporting fulfillment of



Article 5 obligations. We welcome the reference made to it in Action 44 of the draft Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan. Establishing such a fund would further encourage universalization by demonstrating the tangible benefits of being part of this community, particularly for affected states. Establishing such a fund as a successful instrument of universalization should be an urgent priority.

I thank you.