



Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention 5th Review Conference

November 2024

Statement on Clearing Mined Areas

Mr. President, mine clearance is the cornerstone of addressing the threat of landmines, reducing their devastating impact on communities, and enabling recovery and sustainable development.

Commendable progress has been made, with 2023 seeing a record-breaking 237.23 square kilometers of mined areas cleared globally, as highlighted in the latest Clearing the Mines Report. Such achievements demonstrate the transformative impact of sustained commitment and investment. This progress is made possible by the extraordinary dedication of deminers worldwide. Working tirelessly in challenging conditions, they save lives, reclaim land, and restore hope to affected communities, and are truly at the heart of our mission. HALO is proud to be part of this global effort, with over 12,000 staff working across 29 countries and territories. Many of these individuals come from the communities most affected by landmines, bringing unique insights, commitment, and local ownership to this life-saving work. Together, their efforts embody the human impact of clearance: creating safer futures and empowering communities to rebuild.

At the same time, the challenges that lie ahead remain immense. Contamination levels are rising in conflicts such as those in Ukraine, Yemen, and Myanmar due to the widespread use of anti-personnel mines, including improvised devices. Factors such as competing priorities and limited funding make the fulfilment of Article 5 obligations increasingly complex. Heavily affected States highlight the need for targeted interventions to address these growing challenges effectively.



Despite the challenges, there remain many examples of consistent and sustainable progress in clearance operations. Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe are two such examples. Through strong leadership from their respective national authorities, robust coordination among in-country operators, and dedicated support from the international community, Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe have clear pathways to completion and “mine free” status. In addition to these achievements, Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe offer models for implementing the necessary development work that affected communities so desperately need following decades of contamination. Importantly, Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe demonstrate how, through national coordination and strategic partnerships, this development work can occur in tandem with clearance, not just in sequence.

However, these achievements are not guaranteed. We call on the international community to continue their financial support and to maintain momentum towards completion so that Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe, and all mine-affected countries can reach their “mine free” milestone. We remain grateful to the international community, whose support has enabled this life-saving work and whose contributions remain essential.

We welcome the focus in the new Siem Reap Angkor Action Plan on advancing clearance efforts, particularly through the use of evidence-based methodologies to establish accurate baselines of contamination, including improvised mines. Recognition of improvised explosive devices as part of the Convention’s scope ensures that this evolving threat is addressed comprehensively. Moreover, the promotion of updated standards and innovative technologies will enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of clearance efforts globally.

Looking ahead, HALO looks forward to strengthening collaboration between national authorities and operators to maximise impact. Clearance is not only a technical exercise, but the way towards safety, stability, and opportunity. By keeping clearance at the core of mine action, we can continue to drive progress towards the shared goal of a mine-free world.

Thank you.