



**NPA Statement on Agenda Item 8(c): Clearing Mined Areas
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, President,

This year's Mine Action Review Clearing the Mines report marked yet another consecutive year with the highest ever clearance output globally, with more than 237 km² cleared in 2023. 94% of this clearance effort occurred in states party to this treaty, underscoring the critical role of the APMBC to rid the world of these indiscriminate weapons once and for all. In 2023, NPA released almost 19 million m² of land previously contaminated by landmines, back to the local communities for their safe and productive use.

However, square meters alone are not enough. To successfully fulfill the clearance obligations, affected States Parties need to demonstrate strong national ownership and political will, accurate understanding of contamination and realistic but ambitious completion plans; their national standards need to be developed based on the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), with strong information management system in place and transparent and accurate reporting; gender and diversity considerations need to be integrated into mine action responses, environment needs to be protected; and capacity development of national authorities needs to be prioritized to ensure strong present and residual contamination management.

According to the Mine Action Review's monitoring of the Oslo Action Plan some progress has been made, but a lot remains to be done to advance the fulfillment of the Article 5 obligations.

Only 13% of affected States Parties have established an accurate baseline of contamination, which is a first step towards completion.

National standards reflect IMAS in only 53% of affected States Parties. Article 5 obligations are time-bound, and we can only meet them if we apply context-specific land release methodology in accordance with the guidelines set in IMAS. This would ensure operational efficiency through implementing sector best practice in all affected States Parties.

Affected States Parties should also establish accurate information management systems with minimum data requirements, as per IMAS, to ensure operational efficiency and effective reporting. Strong IM systems support transparent and accurate reporting, which is crucial for demonstrating progress and maintaining accountability.

Significant improvements should be also made towards ensuring there are sustainable national capacities through capacity development efforts. This work empowers national actors to meet national objectives and obligations under the Convention, to move ever closer to international standards, and to work effectively to protect their populations. Mine action donors and organizations should make resources available to work with the affected States Parties in a spirit of partnership and cooperation.

Distinguished delegates,

This treaty was built to protect civilians from the harm caused by landmine contamination and its objective can only be fulfilled if no one is left behind. To ensure Article 5 obligations are met fully and meaningfully, mainstreaming gender and diversity throughout the entire mine action response is a prerequisite. National authorities should integrate gender and diversity into their national plans and strategies, operators should integrate it into land release operations, as well as internally. This may involve higher costs, which donors should not only fund but actively require to ensure Article 5 obligations are implemented meaningfully and inclusively.

Any efforts towards the Article 5 obligations must take the environment into account. We welcome the draft Siem Reap action plan commitments to the environment and climate change. Together with the updated IMAS 7.13 on environmental management, this will generate the momentum for the sector to adapt, and support affected communities in becoming more resilient to climate change. NPA's Green Field Tool to assess and mitigate environmental and climate risks is being rolled out in NPA programmes, after which we will make this tool available for the whole sector next year.

Finally, we would like to congratulate the presidency on the strong draft action plan, which we hope will be further strengthened by a more ambitious timeline for establishing an Article 5 implementation fund. This would enable affected States Parties unable to mobilize support for their clearance efforts to fulfill their legal obligations, as well as allow smaller donor states to support such efforts, in line with the Convention.

Thank you.