



Statement by
the Republic of Slovenia
at the

5th Review Conference, Item 8. e (i) Cooperation and Assistance

Siem Reap, 28 November 2024

Mr President,

Thank you for giving me the floor and for your comprehensive overview of how cooperation and assistance have been addressed in the proposed outcome documents of this conference. Let me also extend my gratitude to the keynote speaker, [XY], and to Japan for its dedicated chairing of the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance this year.

While I align myself with the EU statement, I would like to offer a few additional remarks in a national capacity.

International cooperation and assistance have always been vital to the successful implementation of the Convention. Slovenia has taken Article 6 of the Convention seriously, providing sustained support to affected countries through care and rehabilitation programs, social and economic reintegration of mine victims, mine awareness campaigns, and assistance for mine clearance and related activities since the Convention's early days.

Many of you may be aware of the International Trust Fund (ITF), established by the Government of Slovenia in March 1998. Since its inception, the ITF has evolved into a crucial instrument for reconstruction and development in countries affected by armed conflicts and anti-personnel mines. By addressing both immediate and long-term challenges, the ITF has significantly improved the lives of people in conflict and post-conflict areas.

The Slovenian government continues to support the ITF politically, financially, and through in-kind contributions. To date, Slovenia has provided over €16.3 million in regular donations to support priority areas of Slovenian development cooperation and humanitarian aid. These include demining, medical and psychosocial rehabilitation for victims, and facilitating their reintegration into society.

Through ITF projects, Slovenia contributes to demining and victim assistance initiatives in Bosnia and Herzegovina, supports stabilization efforts in conflict-affected communities in north-eastern Syria, addresses the needs of vulnerable groups in Lebanon, provides psychosocial rehabilitation for children in Armenia affected by the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh, and supports the MDC Polyclinic in Kabul.

In Ukraine, our focus includes humanitarian and development activities such as demining, psychosocial support, and rehabilitation. I am particularly proud of our targeted assistance for children, the most vulnerable group, and our initiatives to train trainers who address children's psychosocial needs.

Before concluding, let me reaffirm Slovenia's unwavering commitment to the ultimate goal of a mine-free world. Achieving this aspiration could be within the reach of the international community, if universally endorsed. I would like to draw your attention also to the fact that Article 5 completion is not the end of the story. Affected countries and communities often face ongoing challenges in providing adequate assistance to victims, whose needs endure long after minefields are cleared.

Allow me to end with a simple yet profound quote from the Convention: *"Each State Party in a position to do so shall provide assistance..."* Let us remain steadfast in fulfilling this collective responsibility.

Thank you.