

Mr. President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honor for me to address you at this Fifth Review Conference of the Ottawa Convention on behalf of ITF Enhancing Human Security. I wish to express our profound gratitude to the Cambodian Presidency for the leadership of the Fifth Review Conference and to the Kingdom of Cambodia for their hospitality in hosting this event.

As we reflect on the critical work we have accomplished together, it is crucial we reaffirm our unwavering commitment to the elimination of anti-personnel mines and the protection of civilians from their devastating impact.

ITF greatly appreciates the tremendous humanitarian work and efforts of everyone involved in mine action during another unprecedented year. However, as we gather to review the progress made and chart the path forward, it is clear that significant challenges remain.

With armed conflicts escalating in almost every part of the world, we must continue to maintain and increase international support for mine action. Competing priorities are leading to states with massive contamination experiencing insufficient funding or even a complete loss of donor support. Such circumstances call for sustained global partnerships and cooperation in burden sharing, innovative funding and technical approaches, and especially national ownership.

ITF would like to emphasize the critical importance of sustainable assistance to survivors, that goes beyond the immediate medical care, and we urge the donor community to increase their contributions to this vital field. In August of this year, we had the pleasure of participating at the European Regional Conference on Advancing Victim Assistance Implementation and Cooperation held in Ljubljana, and wish to stress the need for comprehensive assistance to survivors, which must address both immediate needs and long-term recovery. This can only be achieved through continuous cooperation between affected and donor states, national and international NGOs, and other national and international bodies, and especially by prioritizing the voices and experiences of those directly affected by landmines.

By advancing victim-centered approaches grounded in human rights, gender equality, and inclusion, we can provide opportunities and uplift survivors, their families and their broader communities from the horrors they have experienced to recover with dignity and rebuild their lives.

As we stand united in our shared commitment to a mine-free world, let us recognize the successes of the Convention to date, but also the difficult work that remains ahead. Together, through continued cooperation and dedication, we can overcome the challenges before us. The Ottawa Convention has brought us closer to a world free from the devastating impact of landmines, and with each step forward, we reaffirm our collective responsibility to protect civilians, assist survivors, and ensure stability and, ultimately, peace.

ITF extends its deepest gratitude to all of our donors and partners whose unwavering support makes our work and the work of other similar organizations possible. They have stood by us

with dedication, patience, and a shared commitment to a better future, one that – despite the setbacks – feels achievable thanks to the meaningful progress we continue to make together.