

## CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

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### Statement by Ambassador Stefano Toscano, GICHD Director

#### Ninth Annual Pledging Conference for the Implementation of the APMBC | 1 March 2024

Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you on your election as President of the Fifth Review Conference of the APMBC. After years of productive cooperation with Cambodia, we look forward to supporting your efforts towards a successful Review Conference.

Let me also express our gratitude and appreciation to Juan Carlos and his team for their remarkable work and critical support to APMBC implementation.

For many years now, the GICHD has been supporting the Convention's machinery, particularly its Implementation Support Unit. In agreement with the States Parties of the Convention, and thanks to the support from Switzerland, the Centre continues to host the ISU, providing it with office space, logistical and administrative support, thus contributing to the efficient work of the Convention.

Our fruitful cooperation with and support to the ISU, and the Convention more broadly, goes well beyond logistical and administrative aspects. Let me highlight a few examples:

- In 2023, the GICHD provided comments to the art. 5 extension request submitted by Ukraine. Similar support is planned for the extension requests to be submitted in 2024.
- In October 2023, the GICHD hosted a strategy stakeholder workshop in South Sudan to support the development of South Sudan's new national mine action strategy. We were very pleased that the ISU could participate in this meeting.

- The GICHD took part in the Regional Conference on Addressing Improvised Anti-Personnel Mines in West Africa and Sahel States Parties, organised by the ISU this February, in Ghana. The GICHD was invited to deliver two presentations, one on national capacities needed to address contamination by improvised mines and another on the promotion of international cooperation and assistance.
- Finally, and for several years, the Centre has participated in the APMBC Coordinating Committee, actively contributing to its work in support of the Convention. Moreover, the Centre is a founding and active member of the informal Gender and Diversity in Mine Action Working Group and supports States Parties and the Gender Focal Points of the APMBC Coordinating Committee in the implementation of the gender and diversity related actions of the Oslo Action Plan.

Mr. President,

We invite States Parties in a position to do so to mobilise sufficient resources to fund the operations of the Implementation Support Unit, which remains a central element in the effective implementation of the APMBC.

We also strongly encourage pledges of support for the Sponsorship Programme, which allows mine-affected countries to bring their voices and experience to the meetings of the APMBC, where implementation is reviewed and decisions on the next steps are taken. This is particularly important this year, as the Fifth Review Conference will give us the opportunity to agree on a roadmap for our collective efforts in the next five years.

The GICHD is determined to continue making its contribution to these collective efforts, working closely with the Presidency, the ISU, the States Parties, operators, and civil society.

Thank you.