



Statement by Humanity & Inclusion (HI)
Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
Eighth International Pledging Conference
1 March 2024
Geneva

Mr. President, Excellences, Distinguished Delegates , dear colleagues,

We are grateful for the opportunity given to us today to carry the voice of Humanity and Inclusion. We salute the other mine action operators for the colossal work they do daily, as well as the contributing States for their support to the victims and their efforts for a world free of mines.

We positively acknowledge the commitments made by contributing States in providing crucial and continuous investments to Humanitarian Mine Action operations in Ukraine to ensure that the contamination threat is addressed, and victims systematically supported. The deployment and scale up of innovative methods such as the use of drones have been critical in ensuring a faster and safer mapping of hazardous areas, and this experiment constitutes opportunities for replication in other settings.

Despite the international community's endeavors to make the Conventions universal, fresh active conflicts have arisen. We wish to express grave concern regarding the widespread use of large explosive weapons and conventional weapons in populated areas. Such practices persistently inflict significant harm upon civilians and will impede future recovery efforts.

We are also concerned that access of Humanitarian Mine Action operators to active conflicts is very often impeded by heavy bureaucracy. It deeply impacts Humanitarian Mine Action emergency programmes and prevent operators to access conflict- affected populations. Flexible Humanitarian Mine Action funding is key to ensure that Humanitarian Mine Action operators remain safe and can proceed to continuous adjustments to remain operational in such complex settings.

Still, new conflicts will always emerge. This is thus for us all to support the implementation of measures that would allow civilians to be prepared to future shocks and protected from armed violence, and national Mine Action and Victim assistance actors to operate under compliant policies, with sufficient capacities to respond autonomously. Thus funding of long term programmes combining both Humanitarian Mine Action and peacebuilding purposes, with strong localisation and people-centered approaches, is essential.

We can also foresee an intensification of natural disasters and displacements related to climate change in the upcoming years. We encourage Explosive Ordnance affected and contributing States to

support more initiatives taking into account the EO threat in preparedness and response planning in order to protect civilians from both threats.

We also draw attention to the need to continue clearance efforts in countries where contamination, inherited from previous conflicts, is losing attention and yet continues to destroy lives and has been an obstacle to inclusive development and the establishment of a lasting peace.

We therefore encourage contributing States to continue advocating for the universalization of the conventions, provide sustainable and flexible humanitarian mine action funding to support the numerous affected States in the difficult challenge in being mine free, as well as support further efforts made by affected states to define clear strategies, compliant and inclusive national policies that we, as Humanitarian Mine Action operator, can support on.

Thank you.