



Draft Statement to be delivered by South Africa on behalf of the Africa Group during the Twenty Second Meeting of State Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction

1 to 5 December 2025, Geneva, Switzerland

Item 9: (f) Universalising the Convention

Madam President,

At the outset, the Africa Group would like to commend Your Excellency Ambassador ICHIKAWA Tomiko for your leadership and commitment in directing the efforts of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. Your guidance has been crucial in preserving the integrity and humanitarian objectives of this convention.

The Africa Group welcomes the ratification of the Convention by the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the accession by the Kingdom of Tonga.

We recognise progress made over the years the norms established against the deployment of anti-personnel mines, with most States Parties conforming to these standards. We equally express concern over the continued threat posed by anti-personnel landmines and the Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) including the increasing use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) by terrorist groups, and their use in some recent conflicts.

The Africa Group remains firmly committed to the goals of the Convention. We reiterate our long-standing position that anti-personnel mines are inherently indiscriminate and continue to have devastating humanitarian, socio-economic, and developmental consequences, as well as constituting violations of human rights and the principles of international humanitarian law (IHL).

Madam President, these weapons have caused untold suffering across continents, maiming, killing, and traumatising countless innocent civilians, including women and children long after conflicts have ended, yet some are still contending with the enduring impact of anti-personnel mines, which result in civilian casualties, obstruct development, and hinder recovery efforts.

While we recognise the change and the volatile global security landscape, we remain concerned about the use of anti-personnel mines in various parts of the world, including the use highlighted in recent allegations, reports and documented evidence.

We take the opportunity to stress the importance of the full and effective implementation and compliance of the Convention, including through the continued implementation of its action plans.

We believe that the strength of the Convention lies in its collective ability to address emerging threats within the framework of dialogue and cooperation.

Madam President, we note with deep concern the recent developments involving withdrawals and steps that introduce uncertainty regarding the continued application of obligations under the Convention. We recall that the Convention does not provide for the suspension of its application, and we view any actions that generate ambiguity in this regard as cause for serious concern and setting an undesirable precedent. Such developments risk weakening the integrity of the Convention, potentially eroding the humanitarian gains achieved over decades and diminishing confidence in our shared commitment to uphold its principles. The Group therefore underscores the importance of preserving the universality, credibility, and collective responsibility that form the foundation of this Convention.

In closing the Africa Group encourages state parties with Article 5 clearance obligations to enhance their efforts to meet their deadlines, including by strengthening technical capacity, demonstrating political will, and allocating sufficient funds for mine action, and recognise the importance of cooperation and assistance, in the enhanced implementation of the Convention, including through the individualised

approach, which offers mine-affected countries a platform for presenting their challenges.

I Thank you