

2025 APMBC Intersessional

Clearance statement

Ireland

Thank you, Chair

Ireland aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union.

Chair,

As this is my delegation's first time taking the floor, allow me to congratulate Japan on its assumption of the Presidency and allow me to thank the Chairs of the coordinating committee and the ISU for all of their efforts in carrying forward the decisions of the Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan.

We would also like to thank the members of the committee on Article 5 implementation for all their efforts in this intersessional period, as well as to the States Parties that have provided updates on their activities towards completing their clearance obligations.

We particularly welcome the updates including efforts made with regard to integrating gender and the diverse needs of mine affected communities, as well as environmental considerations, into their implementation efforts, in line with the Angkor Action Plan.

Chair,

Article 5 is paramount for ensuring no future casualties, and alleviating continued suffering in mine-affected communities. Unfortunately, due to newly mined areas and newly discovered contaminated areas, we must again call for strengthened efforts to accelerate the pace of survey and clearance activities, to end unnecessary suffering and promote sustainable development.

We recognise the various obstacles and challenges that affected states face in meeting their Article 5 obligations, including financial resource constraints, security concerns, border challenges, topography, matters concerning access to contaminated areas, and interruptions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Unfortunately, over the Convention's history, we have witnessed an increase in repeated extensions, missed deadlines, delayed implementation, and non-implementation of commitments. Article 5 extension requests should be an exceptional measure, and States

should make every effort to complete their obligations under the Treaty in full and on time. The failure to implement clearance obligations under the Treaty, and to regularly communicate progress, has significant humanitarian and socio-economic impacts.

As set out in action 23 of the Angkor Action Plan, extension requests should contain detailed, costed and multi-year work plans for the extension period, as well as plans for context-specific mine risk education and reduction in affected communities. Providing such detail gives States Parties confidence that the extension request is realistic and implementable. It strengthens the Convention and its goals as a whole.

We look forward to continuing discussions on how to encourage improvements in this regard, particularly in light of a high number of incoming extension requests, including through a potential Article 5 informal support group. The group could serve to support affected States Parties in preparing and submitting extension requests and provide an inclusive platform for dialogue between all relevant stakeholders. It could also ensure better alignment of work plans with the necessary funding, including through engaging with the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance.

Similarly, we look forward to advancing discussions regarding the feasibility and potential establishment of a voluntary trust fund to support affected States Parties struggling to secure the necessary international assistance to adhere to their Article 5 commitments, including in relation to clearance. We believe such a mechanism could be a welcome and valuable element to ensure States Parties with relatively small areas of contamination can successfully complete their Article 5 commitments, which will be of benefit to local communities and the Convention as a whole. Since 2006, Ireland has provided over €65 million in funding for humanitarian demining, including on clearance activities. We know the importance of this life-saving work and will continue our commitment to advancing such efforts and achieving a mine-free world.

Chair,

Our focus on Article 5 – and the impact on individuals and communities of a failure to implement it in full – underlines that we must re-affirm our commitments to uphold and promote the norm established against these inhumane weapons. Ireland condemns the use of anti-personnel landmines, in any circumstance and by any actor. We call on all actors to cease the use of these indiscriminate weapons, and we call on all stakeholders to continue

effectively implementing the Convention, including clearance obligations, for the sake of current and future generations.

I thank you