

**Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
Intersessional Meeting
Geneva, 17-20 June 2025**

**STATEMENT BY THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA
ON THE WITHDRAWAL FROM THE CONVENTION**

H.E. Mr. Darius STANIULIS,
Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office in Geneva

Geneva, 20 June 2025

Ms. President,

Please allow me to begin by congratulating you, Ambassador Tomiko ICHIKAWA, on your appointment as President of the 22nd Meeting of the States Parties of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. Lithuania highly appreciates the constructive engagement with the Presidency over the past months.

Dear colleagues,

As you all already know, this year Lithuania made a sovereign decision to withdraw from the Convention, and this was not done lightly. It followed extensive internal deliberation, rigorous inter-institutional consultation, and sober reflection on the dramatically altered security landscape in Lithuania's region. Lithuania's decision is not unique - other States in our neighborhood are withdrawing from the Convention. Throughout this process, Lithuania has remained transparent, cooperative and accountable, and I speak today in that same spirit of openness.

The security context in which Lithuania joined the Convention in 2003 has deteriorated. At the time, we hoped that multilateral disarmament efforts would be irreversible, helping to solidify a lasting peace in Europe.

Unfortunately, in recent years, this goal of peace in Europe has been steadily undermined by countries, which pursue imperialistic ambitions while demonstrating contempt for international norms.

As a State located on NATO's eastern flank, today Lithuania faces an acute and evolving threat to its national security from the Russian Federation. Being not a party to the Convention, the Russian Federation wages an illegal war of aggression against Ukraine in blatant violation of international law, including the UN Charter, and uses all possible munitions, including anti-personnel mines for its predatory purposes. Russia – a nuclear-armed, permanent member of UN Security Council – is engaged in dangerous military intimidation and hybrid destabilization targeting its neighbors. What is the international community doing in this situation?

Under these circumstances, Lithuania is taking decisions that are necessary to strengthen its deterrence and defense capabilities, protect its population, and safeguard its territorial integrity, national sovereignty and independence. Our withdrawal from the Convention is not a retreat from international humanitarian law, but a deliberate and necessary recalibration of our national security posture in response to external threats. While we are withdrawing from the Convention, Lithuania reaffirms its strong and enduring commitment to fully comply with its obligations under international humanitarian law.

Lithuania will continue effectively implementing, *inter alia*, the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, and the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, including its Amended Protocol II and Protocol V.

Consistent with these obligations, we are committed to taking all feasible precautions to protect civilians from the effects of anti-personnel mines. Such precautions include, without being limited to, the use of fencing, signage, warning and monitoring by military personnel to protect civilians. Lithuania also intends to maintain accurate records concerning mine-affected areas and start demining activities as soon as conditions allow, after the cessation of possible active hostilities or when the treat has passed.

Despite our withdrawal from the Convention, Lithuania remains deeply committed to the humanitarian considerations that inspired the Convention, in particular, the norm against the indiscriminate use of weapons. We are committed to international cooperation and assistance to mitigate the humanitarian implications of mines and explosive remnants of war. Our leadership, together with Iceland, of the Demining Capability Coalition for Ukraine, is a clear testament to that commitment.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Lithuania's readiness to engage in respectful dialogue with all stakeholders concerning our withdrawal. We are confident that our policy and practice related to anti-personnel mines will address all emerging humanitarian concerns on this issue.

Lithuania intends to complete our withdrawal from the Convention in a transparent and legal manner, and in full compliance with Article 20 of the Convention. Lithuania will notify the Depositary, the UN Security Council and all other States Parties of the withdrawal by the end of June.

I thank you, Ms. President.