

Dear Ms President,

1. Over the years, Poland has consistently upheld efforts to strengthen the international legal framework in disarmament and non-proliferation. We supported negotiations of a worldwide ban on antipersonnel landmines. Following our accession to the Ottawa Convention, we ensured full compliance and destroyed all stockpiles of antipersonnel landmines.

2. However, since we ratified the Ottawa Convention, the regional security environment has deteriorated dramatically. Russia's unprovoked aggression against Ukraine and its destabilising activities pose a direct threat to Poland and its neighbours. Massive land invasion is no longer a term in military history but a contemporary warfare in Ukraine. Bilateral and multilateral efforts to stop Russia's aggressive actions have proved futile.

3. Effective disarmament cannot be one-sided. We cannot afford to limit or restrain the capabilities of our armed forces while Russia is embarking on an unprecedented military build-up. Russia's use of anti-personnel mines in Ukraine has been widely documented.

4. In this new context, Poland had to adapt its defence posture to evolving threats on our border. Changes in our landmine policy result from the drastically deteriorated security environment in the region.

Ms President,

5. The requisite legislative bill on withdrawing from the Convention will be voted on in the Polish parliament in the upcoming weeks. This step will formally commence our withdrawal procedure.

Mme. President,

6. Stay assured that despite the ongoing withdrawal procedure, Poland will remain committed to the Convention's overarching objectives of reducing the humanitarian harm posed by anti-personnel mines. We underline our unwavering support for all obligations under the International Humanitarian Law, notably the prohibition of indiscriminate use of weapons and the principles of distinction, proportionality and precautions in attack. Poland remains fully committed to the principles of international humanitarian law, especially the protection of civilians in conflict zones.

7. Poland will continue to provide contributions to mine-clearance humanitarian programmes and demining activities, including by supporting the development of mine-clearance and mine-detection equipment.

I thank you, Ms President.