



**Statement by South Africa during the
Intersessional Meeting of the Antipersonnel Mine Ban Convention**

17- 20 June 2025

Agenda Item 7(a) Universalisation

Madam President,

South Africa aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the African Group and wishes to make the following remarks in a national capacity.

South Africa extends appreciation to you, Madam President, for your leadership in guiding the work of the Convention during this critical time. Your dedication has helped to maintain the spirit and purpose of this important humanitarian instrument, despite the growing complexity of the global security landscape.

South Africa remains deeply committed to the humanitarian imperative of banning anti-personnel mines. These weapons are inherently indiscriminate and incompatible with the fundamental principles of International Humanitarian Law. Their continued use, long after conflicts end, leaves a tragic legacy of suffering, devastating lives and communities and obstructing post-conflict recovery and development.

We also take this opportunity to acknowledge the extensive work undertaken within the Convention over the years, particularly in the development and implementation of successive action plans, culminating in the Siem Reap Action Plan adopted at the Fifth Review Conference. These collective efforts reflect a shared commitment to eradicating the use, stockpiling, and production of anti-personnel mines. The progress made should not be overlooked, nor should it be diminished by the pressures of current geopolitical tensions. It is precisely during times of global uncertainty that we must reaffirm the principles and achievements that underpin this Convention.

Madam President,

South Africa is deeply concerned by the recent trend of withdrawals or expressions of intent to withdraw from the Convention. While we fully recognize the fragile and volatile international security environment across all regions, we caution against reverting to weapons that have been globally condemned. The deteriorating situation serves as a reminder of how quickly security conditions can shift, but it must not become a justification for undermining global humanitarian norms.

In this context, we urge all states, including those contemplating withdrawal or procurement of anti-personnel mines, to exercise utmost restraint, and to refrain from using or sourcing anti-personnel mines, including from states not party to the Convention. Such actions would only further inflame tensions, exacerbate human suffering, and erode confidence in the global disarmament regime.

Madam President,

South Africa believes in the importance of dialogue, support, and cooperation. We therefore urge all states under strain to remain within the Convention, to bring their concerns to this table, and to work with us toward constructive solutions.

To this end, South Africa proposes an extension of the scope of the Corporate Compliance Committee, in support of the Presidency to also address the emerging challenges of universalising the convention amid the growing geopolitical tensions. The committee could provide tailored support to: i) States Parties facing internal or external pressure related to security developments; ii) States considering withdrawal; iii) States not party to the Convention whose actions are contributing to regional insecurity or indirectly encouraging withdrawal. This mechanism would help ensure that solutions are pursued within the Convention, rather than outside of it, and would demonstrate our shared commitment to protecting the humanitarian gains that have been collectively achieved.

Madam President,

South Africa recognises that some states may view this Convention through a different lens, often prioritizing the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). While the CCW remains a critical component of the disarmament landscape, it has not yielded significant progress on the issue of anti-personnel mines due to longstanding political deadlocks. By contrast, the APMBC has delivered tangible results, and its success must not be overshadowed or undermined.

In conclusion Madam President, South Africa reaffirms that the APMBC remains a valid, relevant, and powerful humanitarian instrument, and reiterates its call for all States Parties to uphold their commitments, states intending to withdraw to return to the negotiating table; and for non-party states to consider accession. In this pursuit, we call on states to continue working with one another, understanding one another, and supporting one another through the Convention's framework.

I thank you.