

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honor and immense privilege for me to address you at this 17th Meeting of States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention on behalf of ITF Enhancing Human Security.

ITF is honored to be part of the mine action community for more than two decades, where an impressive amount of humanitarian effort has led to unprecedented results since the signing of the Convention. The dedication of the international community towards the ban on the use, stockpiling production and transfer of anti-personnel mines is stronger than ever. Due to this endeavor and the moral obligation to millions of people affected by landmines, we should continue to work tirelessly at providing humanitarian aid.

Mine clearance, victims' assistance, mine risk education, and advocacy are all envoys in the mission of achieving a mine free world. With every removed mine, with every rehabilitated mine victim and with every conducted mine awareness workshop, we are closer to achieving a safer environment and prosperous future.

Unfortunately, despite the significant achievements made, mines and explosive remnants of war still pose a serious and ongoing threat to the civilians around the globe. Due to the nature of the work and the scale of the problem, ITF truly believes that efficient and effective mine action work can only be accomplished with adequate funding and strong partnerships.

This year ITF is celebrating its 20th anniversary and remains firmly committed to clearance, assistance to mine victims and other related activities in the future. We

honor the achievements that have been done so far with the generous and noble support of our donors. During 20 years ITF has raised over 440 million dollars, which were, among others, used to clear over 148 million square meters of mine-contaminated land in South East Europe, Lebanon and Azerbaijan and help 1,303 mine survivors receive the necessary medical rehabilitation. With extensive experience in capacity building we strive to develop local ownership and the transition of full responsibility to mine affected countries.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who have supported and contributed to our work, primarily our donors and partners. We hope to continue our joint effort for a safer future and a mine free world. Minefields can be cleared and safe to live on, but without helping mine victims become mine survivors, no society can benefit and develop in the long run. Thank you.