

Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention – Intersessional Meetings 2024.
Norway statement – Article 5 implementation - *check against delivery*

Thank you to all States Parties that have provided updates so far.

There can be no doubt that this Convention has saved countless lives. But we cannot take success for granted. Keeping up the speed of mine action globally is necessary to reach our goal of preventing humanitarian harm.

We see a deeply concerning trend of *new use* in several states. And every year affected states see the need to request extensions of their clearance deadlines. This tells us that we must work harder to ensure that mine action receives the political attention it deserves, so that we keep up the speed we need on the road to declaring even more states mine free.

Recent years have seen a drop in funding to mine action. We must secure more funding and we must use it wisely. This means ensuring that funds are not squandered on expensive *clearance* in cases where Technical and Non-Technical Survey could lead to land release. Using funds wisely also means coordinating our efforts.

Last year, Norway with several of our partners in mine action presented a mapping of funding for mine-affected states. Among other things the study looked at how affected States Parties close to completing their Article 5 obligations can reach the finishing line. And how we as the international community can support them in doing so. From this stems the idea to set up a fund dedicated to helping States Parties complete the job. We believe there is merit to exploring this further.

Norway will continue to be a major donor to mine action. We will keep pushing for more efficiency, targeted risk education, stronger gender mainstreaming, innovation and greener operations.

We condemn any use of antipersonnel mines by any actor under any circumstance. I reiterate our strongest condemnation of not only Russia's brutal war of aggression against Ukraine, but also their use of anti-personnel mines on Ukrainian territory. Norway will remain strong in our support for Ukraine, including in mine action.

At the same time, we are concerned by the reports of alleged use of anti-personnel mines by Ukraine. Unlike Russia, Ukraine is a party to this Convention. We welcome Ukraine's assurances that they take their legal obligations under the Convention seriously. We note that Ukraine has committed to investigating the alleged use and report on its findings in a transparent manner. We encourage Ukraine to continue working with all partners to ensure that investigations can take place as soon as possible and hope to hear updates on this tomorrow and at the Review Conference.

Although much of the current attention may be on Ukraine, our focus is on compliance by *all* States Parties. We therefore encourage Sudan and Yemen to continue their efforts to investigate the claims of possible use in the past without delay as soon as the security situation allows.