



Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention

Intersessional meeting

Geneva, 18-20 June 2024

EU statement on Mine Clearance (art. 5)

Mr. Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. [Aligning clause]

Mr. Chair,

The European Union would like to thank the Committee for its work with regard to the implementation of Article 5 and related mine clearance actions of the Oslo Action Plan.

We strongly condemn Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine, as well as the use of anti-personnel mines and improvised anti-personnel mines that makes Ukraine the most mine-contaminated country in the world. We call on Russia to immediately stop its war of aggression against Ukraine and demand the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal from the entire territory of Ukraine, within its internationally recognised borders.

The EU has continued and will continue, through policy and funding, to support mine clearance activities to help mine-affected States Parties meet their Article 5 obligations under the Convention.

The EU and its Member States have continued to be major donors for mine action assistance worldwide, supporting universalisation, survey and clearance of mined areas, mine risk education, victim assistance, stockpile destruction, capacity building and research and development in technology for mine detection and clearance. Since the last Review Conference of the Convention in 2019 the EU has remained a major donor to mine action in the world, with 93.42 million euros allocated since 2022 under the crisis response instruments, and another 8.5 million euros in 2022 and 16 million euros in 2023 under humanitarian aid.

The EU has also provided continuous financial support to the Implementation Support Unit of the Convention under Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/257, of 18 February 2021, in support of the Oslo Action Plan for the implementation of the Convention.

Mr. Chair,

Anti-personnel mine contamination continues to cause harm, instil fear, deny access, impede socio-economic development and stop refugees and internally displaced people from returning home. The burden placed by anti-personnel mines and explosive remnants of war on individuals, families, communities, regions and States remains high and unacceptable. We are very concerned about new contaminations in countries such as Iraq, Libya, Syria, Yemen, Myanmar as well as in the Sahel. The EU condemns in the strongest possible terms the use of anti-personnel landmines anywhere, anytime and by any actor.

Additionally, the EU encourages States Parties that are reported to be contaminated by anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature to continue building awareness of the need to address this contamination within the framework of the Convention.

Mr. Chair,

The EU would like to express its strong support towards the States Parties that are making efforts to complete mine clearance operations, to the fullest extent possible by 2025, to bring us closer to the fulfilment of our shared goal of a world free of anti-personnel mines. Significant progress has been made in the implementation of the Oslo Action Plan in that regard, and we must redouble our efforts to meet the challenges that remain.

Over the course of the Convention's history, we have witnessed an increase in repeated extensions, missed deadlines, delayed implementation and non-implementation of commitments. The EU reminds all States that Article 5 deadline extension requests should be considered an exceptional measure, and to make every effort to complete their obligations under the Treaty in full and on time. The EU acknowledges and values the effort and commitment in that regard by many States. We call on States Parties to submit detailed work plans for the extensions periods requested, including cost analysis and context-specific initiatives for mine risk education and reduction in affected communities as set out in Actions 23 and 24 of the Oslo Action Plan. Providing such detail gives States Parties confidence that the extension request is realistic and implementable. The failure to implement clearance obligations under the Convention and to regularly communicate progress has significant humanitarian and socio-economic impacts.

The EU regrets that 14 States Parties have to meet their mine clearance obligations by 2025, and that only a few remain likely to meet this deadline. Therefore, we strongly encourage efforts from all concerned States Parties, given the multiple extension requests expected in

2024. We also call on States Parties to submit detailed work plans for the extension periods requested, including cost analysis and context-specific initiatives for mine risk education and reduction in affected communities.

We also encourage States Parties to keep national mine action standards up to date in accordance with the latest International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).

The EU welcomes the decision by States Parties at 21MSP to continue exploring how to strengthen the Article 5 process, including how to best implement these recommendations and encourages reinforcing the synergies between the Committee on Article 5 Implementation and the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance, as well as enhancing the dialogue with expert organizations.

Finally, the EU supports the establishment of an informal support group for the Article 5 Committee, and continue exploring how to strengthen the Article 5 process including input from relevant stakeholders.

Mr. Chair,

The EU will contribute constructively to a successful consensus outcome of the Review Conference and recalls its support and readiness to engage in mine clearance actions, reaffirming the strong commitment to uphold the norm against anti-personnel mines.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.