

**APMBC Intersessionals 2015**  
**SWITZERLAND**

**Statement on Clearance / Art. 5 implementation (Check against delivery!)**

Mister President / Madame and Mister Coordinators

*Since it is the first time that my delegation is taking the floor, I would like to thank the Government of Belgium for presiding over this Intersessional Meeting of the Anti-Personnel Landmine Convention. Let me commend you for your strenuous efforts in the preparation of this event and assure you of my delegation's full support. And we would like to thank POLAND for the very informative report on the Committee's work.*

Mister President / Madame and Mister Coordinators

States Parties to the Mine Ban Convention adopted an ambitious action plan at the Maputo Review Conference in order to move resolutely towards completing commitments under the Convention. This applies to clearance, where significant challenges remain.

We welcome that a number of affected States parties provided information to quantify and qualify their remaining implementation challenge, as part of their article 7 transparency report. We invite all the States Parties that have not yet been able to provide such information to do so as rapidly as possible.

My delegation also welcomes the information shared by Cyprus, Ethiopia, Mauretania and Senegal on forthcoming extension requests and appreciates the transparency shown by these States Parties. We would like to thank the members of the Article 5 Committee [Ecuador, Ireland, Poland, and Zambia] for their preliminary observations in this regard [as well as the ICRC and ICBL for their comprehensive remarks].

In this context, we would like to emphasise that the process on Article 5 extension requests has been well established for many years. There are different elements that can now be seen as key for extension requests:

In the spirit of *inter alia* #Actions 9, 11 and 23 of the Maputo Action Plan we would, however, also call upon the affected States facing such challenges to avail themselves of the vast experience that the mine action community, including national authorities as well as international and non-governmental organisations, has accumulated within the past years and decades. Switzerland invites affected States in the process of Article 5 implementation to draw upon the experiences by national authorities of other States, by the United Nations, the GICHD and other centres of excellence, and by the operational non-governmental organisations.

In Maputo, we did not only adopt a number of new actions, we also adopted a new machinery to oversee their implementation. In this context, it is of particular importance that States Parties can rely on an article 5 Committee that evaluates new extension requests to be submitted to the MSP, but that also ensures that a cooperative dialogue continues after the requests have been granted. We believe it is important that affected States Parties have a Committee to collaborate with and the possibility to inform all States Parties and the international community on the progress they make and the challenges they face. This gives us, the States Parties to the Convention, the possibility to discuss in a cooperative manner and prepare informed decisions.

Thank you very much.