

**Mine Ban Convention Intersessional Meetings,
Geneva, 19 - 20 May 2016**

Statement by Norway on Implementation of Article 5

Thank you, Madam Chair.

I would first like to congratulate Juan Carlos Ruan on his appointment as the new ISU Director. We also thank the Committee on Article 5 Implementation for its thorough report and preliminary observations.

In the Maputo Declaration, States Parties aspired to meet the goals of the Convention “to the fullest extent possible by 2025.” This was an ambitious goal, but appropriate given the strong track record of the Convention. Still, the repeated Article 5 extension requests that we have seen in recent years, are reminders that we need to accelerate progress significantly to fulfil this aspiration.

The fact that Mozambique is now mine-free, despite being one of the most mine-affected countries when the Convention was adopted, demonstrates that it can be done.

It does however require strong national ownership, sustained international partnerships and a dedicated focus on achieving completion. We place particular value on ensuring close cooperation between mine action operators; and between operators, relevant national authorities and donors; in order to enhance effectiveness on the ground. Reports and documentation produced by civil society can also contribute to more evidence-based planning, and I would like to highlight the importance of the *Landmine Monitor* and the *Clearing the Mines* reports which are updated annually.

Norway remains committed to fulfilling its Article 6 obligation to assist in the implementation of the Convention, including through support for survey activities and mine clearance in affected States.

Norway is currently funding humanitarian mine action in 20 countries in direct partnership with global operators such as Norwegian People’s Aid, Halo Trust and Mines Advisory Group.

A new initiative, the *Global Demining Initiative for Colombia*, was launched by the United States and Norway in February. More than 20 other countries have voiced support for this initiative so far. We support the goal of a mine-free Colombia by the deadline in 2021, and have pledged political, financial and practical support for clearance and mine risk education. Colombia is a heavily affected country and for Norway, as a facilitator of the ongoing peace talks, humanitarian mine action is a priority for the post-conflict period in Colombia. With this new initiative, Colombia will become Norway's single largest country investment over the next three years.

To conclude, we believe that the goal expressed in the Maputo Declaration is still within reach. The primary legal obligation under Article 5 is to complete clearance "as soon as possible". It is our belief that the success of this convention will ultimately be measured by the extent to which this obligation is fulfilled.

Thank you.