

STATEMENT BY SOUTH AFRICA DURING THE 11TH MEETING OF STATES PARTIES TO THE AP MINE BAN CONVENTION, 28 NOVEMBER TO 2 DECEMBER 2011

MINE CLEARANCE

Mr President

My delegation would like to commend you for the excellent manner you have presided over the work of the 11MSP.

Mr President

A number of areas are still contaminated by landmines and other explosive remnants of war. This contamination hampers development, as these areas cannot be used for developmental purposes such as agriculture, manufacturing and housing.

In this connection, we are also concerned that a number of States Parties could not meet their clearance deadlines and consequently requested extensions. The slow pace of clearance hinders reconstruction and development efforts in communities that desperately require land for their developmental needs.

In this regard, it is prudent that the affected States draw up their clearance plans as soon as they join the Convention. In addition, we believe that the allocation of adequate resources will go a long way in addressing these problems.

Mr President

We would like to encourage affected States to engage in cooperation and assistance activities in order to clear all contaminated areas in their territories. States should work together internationally, regionally and at sub-regional levels to fulfil the obligations of the Convention. This can be done through exchange of information, technical expertise, equipment and experience. This means that each State can make some contribution towards cooperation and assistance. Furthermore, we would like to urge the States in a position to do so to provide funding for demining projects.

This will ensure that the risk of mines towards innocent people is eliminated.

I thank you.