

 PM

OTTAWA CONVENTION ON APM

12 MSP

Geneva, 3 – 7 December 2012

Statement by Germany

Mr. Chair,

Germany fully aligns itself with the statement of the EU.

Let me congratulate you on the assumption of this important task and allow me to assure you that the German delegation will support your highly estimated work in every conceivable manner.

We now celebrate a new record in universalization: more than 160 states parties have joined the Ottawa Convention, and the international activities against mines now save approx. 15.000 people every year. However, much remains to be done, as mined areas worldwide are still enormous – and every victim is one too many.

This year we celebrated the 20th anniversary of ICBL. Germany's Federal Foreign Office was honoured to organize - together with ICBL-CMC and the German NGOs Handicap International, medico international and SODI - an exhibition on this occasion which presents photos and works of art to inform the public about the threat posed by APMs and Cluster Munitions. Minister Westerwelle opened the exhibition jointly with ICRC President Peter Maurer and Jody Williams last week in Berlin. Beginning of next year, the exhibition will be shown in Geneva and New York as well. Let me thank UNMAS for its kind offer to participate.

Please allow me to quote from the speech of the Minister, who had just briefly before visited the rehabilitation centre for mine explosion survivors COPE (Cooperative Orthotic and Prosthetic Enterprise) in Vientiane:

"Recently it was made evident to me in Laos how many innocent people are victimized by accidents with munitions that go back to a war finished a long time ago. Especially children are often scarred for life whilst they are playing. Mined areas bring terrible sorrow to people and prevent the development and the reconstruction of the affected countries on years.

(...)

I call upon all those governments which have not joined the Oslo and Ottawa conventions yet: help to prevent that every year innocent people become victims of unexploded ordnance."

Because of these enormous challenges Germany has further raised its contributions to mine clearing and victim assistance. In 2011, 15.6 million € were spent for this purpose, in 2012 18.3 million, and for 2013, 19.9 million € are planned. In spite of the recent financial crisis, Germany raised its contributions during the concerning period of time by approximately one quarter. By this, the Federal Government has made a sustainable contribution to the

"Cartagena action plan" and will continue to do so. It would very much like to allay fears expressed by some partners that "routine" or even "fatigue" reign the Ottawa process.

Mr. Chair,

The continued use of APM, in particular by States parties, is deeply troubling. Germany strongly condemns any use of APM. We deeply regret the reported use in the past two years in Libya and Syria. We are particularly concerned about the reported use by Sudan and Yemen, who are both states parties to the Convention. We call on all concerned states, including Israel and Myanmar, to avoid further use of any APM.

Germany is hopeful that the new Libyan government will soon join both the Ottawa and Oslo Convention and offers assistance in their implementation if requested.

We also welcome positive signs from the new government of Myanmar to possibly join the Convention. Here too, Germany stands ready to support its implementation, in particular regarding stockpile destruction.

As to Yemen, Germany has raised the issue of 2012 laid APM in Sanaa recently with the general staff of the army. We were assured that UXO clearance is under way in the city quarter of Hassaba.

The cases in Yemen and in South Sudan remind us of the importance to redouble our efforts to help prevent the use of mines by non-state actors.

Mr. Chair,

We will have to decide about the requests for extension on clearance by four countries. The request of AFG is substantiated and well founded. We have the fullest understanding for the enormous tasks of the Afghan population to pacify the country and to implement ERW clearance. Given the dimension of the mine and ERW contamination, we share the assessment and fully understand the need for the extension request. Germany like many other delegations stands ready to continue its strong support for the AFG mine clearance efforts. At the same time we acknowledge the degree of local ownership which is meanwhile applied in this country.

Mr. Chair,

as for questions concerning the financing of the APM Treaty, like many delegations Germany supports efforts to further explore and implement possible synergies and to advance efficiencies, for example through streamlining documentation, thus reducing costs. We look forward to any proposals of the ISU or other delegations in this regard, and we invite delegations to seek a consensus on these issues.

Let me conclude by once more thanking all states parties and signatory states, the ICBL-CMC, the ICRC, UNMAS and all implementing NGOs and agencies for the great

achievements in bringing us closer to a universal ban of APM and a world cleared from these weapons. Under your able guidance I wish all of us a successful conference.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.