

STATEMENT

BY

ITF ENHANCING HUMAN SECURITY

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14TH MEETING OF THE STATES PARTIES

**»Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling,
Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines
and on Their Destruction«**

30 NOVEMBER – 04 DECEMBER

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is my great honor and a privilege, to address you on behalf of the ITF Enhancing Human Security and to be able to join you at the 14th Meeting of the State Parties here in Geneva, Switzerland.

At first, ITF would like to express sincere appreciations to all countries that remain committed towards the eradication of antipersonnel mine problem.

The total number of countries that have signed the Convention clearly demonstrates the determination and dedication of signatories aimed towards the universal ban of antipersonnel mines, what ITF sincerely welcomes and supports.

ITF was established by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia in 1998 with the initial purpose to help address the problem of severe contamination with antipersonnel mines after the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Since its inception, ITF has been continuously developing and enhancing its mission. Today we are supporting activities within all mine action pillars and wider in countries throughout South East Europe, Central Asia, South Caucasus, Middle East and North Africa.

While unselfish and generous support of donor community will be unfortunately needed for additional decades to successfully tackle and eradicate the mine problem, I would hereby like to underline some of the main accomplishments achieved through the ITF, to support implementation of Article 5.

Over 131 million square meters of contaminated land was cleared in South East Europe and additional 2 million square meters in South Caucasus with over 44.000 mines found and destroyed. It is important to stress, that with a support provided through the ITF and its donors, 2 countries – Macedonia and Albania achieved Mine Free Status in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention. At this point, ITF would like to pass sincere congratulations to our colleagues from Mozambique for successful implementation of Article 5, which was recently completed. ITF is looking forward to see other countries achieving this goal as soon as possible.

Since its establishment, ITF has given a special attention to holistically address problems of mine victims as well, through physical rehabilitation, psychosocial

support, socioeconomic reintegration and enhancement of national rehabilitation capacities.

While the numbers presented are just a small part of total results achieved by all actors, it shall be underlined that each square meter cleared saves a life, while other activities contribute to a successful reintegration of victims and socioeconomic development of communities as such.

ITF thus sincerely acknowledges the great work conducted by all relevant mine action players worldwide. From the perspective of ITF - an organization that manages implementation of projects on the ground – the holistic mine action approach has been and will continue to be an integral part of ITF's global activities in the future.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

ITF calls member state parties and other participating organizations to continue with their efforts that will ensure adequate care and rehabilitation to survivors and their communities, clearance of contaminated areas, risk education and destruction of stockpiles. I would like to use this opportunity on behalf of the ITF to thank all the donors for their undivided support towards eradication of antipersonnel mine problem worldwide.

ITF is ready to share its expertise with all interested countries and partners in need to successfully achieve our common goal – world free of mines.

AT last but not least, ITF would also like to thank the Secretariat and the organizers for their excellent arrangements in preparing this 14th Meeting of the State Parties.

Thank you.