

Mr. President,

As I am taking the floor for the first time in your presidency, I would like to congratulate you on your election and assure you my Delegation support during your tenure.

Mr. President,

As reported in our report, Ethiopia used to be one of the 10 most heavily mine contaminated countries in the world, 59,629,764 sq. mt. were cleared and 1,190,317,900 sq.mt. were technically verified and released for the community use. During the clearance 9,260 Anti-Personnel mines found and destroyed.

Without prejudice to the above major achievements, mine action was faced with some difficulties in the course of accomplishing its obligation. Despite such encouraging progress, however, we admit that since the closure of the former EMA-office, we have missed the deadline and thus not complied with the Convention. This should not, however, led the ICBL to unfairly accuse my country of violating the Convention as it has been done with intent. ICBL being not one of the State Parties, does not have the right to arbitrary use of unnecessary languages.

We expect the ICBL next time to use constructive languages rather than abusive statements. In conclusion, Ethiopia would like to reaffirm its commitment to comply with the Convention.