



Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention

15<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties

28 November – 1 December

Santiago, Chile

## General Statement by MAG

(Check Against Delivery)

Thank you Madam President,

The 2025 clock is ticking, particularly for survey and clearance. Completion in many States is achievable and our sector has the people, knowledge and good practice to succeed by then; in some cases even sooner. Yet in countries like Angola, Afghanistan and Cambodia we can only succeed with a step change in sustained funding, alongside the full application of good practice at our disposal.

With this in mind, MAG would like to draw your attention to *Clearing the Mines 2016*. This is the latest publication by the Mine Action Review, an independent project led by our colleagues at Norwegian People's Aid. This edition is supported by both MAG and the Halo Trust. Our three organisations' logos on the front cover reflect the cooperation and partnership between our three organisations, as we work together to identify areas where best practice can be better applied.

*Clearing the Mines* takes a country-by-country approach and adds analysis and recommendations to objective research. It will be this lunchtime, and we call on all States and stakeholders to draw on it as a practical resource tool to achieve completion.

Success in survey and clearance will continue to depend on the effective risk management that is at the heart of our sector's good practice. As States and their partners plan for completion, they should also consider how they will put in place the capacity to respond to contamination that is not known about at the time of completion, but which may subsequently be identified.

Planning for sustainable national management of residual risk should be seen as an integral component of the completion agenda. It should be approached pragmatically, but in the full spirit of the Convention and its obligations. In MAG's view, it is rightly on the agenda for 2017 as a key policy issue.

Equally relevant to 2017 is the new humanitarian emergency caused by improvised landmine use, particularly in the Middle East. We welcome the profile and priority given to this issue by delegations in this meeting.

The use of improvised landmines is not a new phenomenon and our community has addressed them since the earliest days of our sector. Yet the last few years have seen industrial scale production and deployment. At the same time, a familiar concept has often been framed under a catch-all banner of

IEDs. This can threaten the norms and stigma that this Convention upholds, as well as the fundamental principles on which the safety and security of humanitarian workers and the conflict-affected communities we work to serve depends.

When we call so-called pressure plate IEDs what they are – anti-personnel landmines – we uphold the highest standards of international humanitarian law. We can also draw on the skills and experience that our sector has developed over three decades of innovation and dedication. MAG's teams in the Middle East have cleared thousands of improvised landmines in recent months, in one of the most complex humanitarian contexts. Despite our efforts and achievements, the need for this work is only set to rise.

MAG is pleased to be co-hosting a side-event with GICHD on this on Wednesday, and we hope that you will be able to join us. As always, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our donors, including those who are supporting our emergency response work in the Middle East. And of course, our thanks also go to Chile.

Many thanks Madam President.

**ENDS**