

Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction

**15th Meeting of States-Parties
Santiago, Chile**

Remarks by Ireland on Cooperation and Assistance

Madam President

Ireland aligns itself with the statement made by the European Union and would like to add the following in our national capacity. I would like to thank the members of the Committee on Cooperation and Assistance for their report. We agree with these findings and look forward to their implementation.

The presence of landmines, including anti-personnel mines, constitutes a threat to human security and a serious impediment to development and rehabilitation in post-conflict societies. Moreover, as increasingly witnessed by a variety of actors, landmines pose an often insurmountable obstacle to humanitarian operations, denying access to populations in need. Clearing landmines not only prevents further human casualties, but also frees entire communities from fear, thus paving the way for reconstruction, development, agricultural production, and business opportunities.

Humanitarian mine action programmes, including weapons and ammunition disposal are an important aspect of Ireland's support to the Ottawa Convention, the Convention on Cluster munitions and the CCW. Our focus is on building resilience in countries experiencing instability and fragility, on saving lives and alleviating the suffering of vulnerable people before, during and in the aftermath of crises.

Ireland's aid programmes integrate a gender focus into all its work and we are looking forward to tomorrow's panel meeting on this important aspect of demining.

Total Irish Aid expenditure for humanitarian demining in 2016 was euro 2.97 million. This included funding for major programmes of work in Afghanistan, Zimbabwe and Somalia. In addition financing was also provided to Lao PDR, Vietnam, Myanmar and Cambodia.

Ireland has also been pleased to resume our cooperation with Slovenia's ITF in recent years and we were pleased to provided assistance for their work in Bosnia and Hercegovina and in Ukraine through this funding.

ENDS