



**16th Meeting of State Parties
to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
Vienna 18-21 December 2018
Statement on International Cooperation**

Dear Excellencies, Ladies, and Gentlemen,

I am happy to be standing in front of you all here today as a small token of our appreciation to the International Cooperation extended among states who share the same plight and states who are willing and dedicated to extend a helping hand.

The magnitude of the landmine problem in Somalia and its impact is tremendous. The current level of contamination is inhibiting humanitarian relief and economic development in the country. Mines are scattered inside Somalia around important towns and key civilian infrastructure, such as water sources and bridges, and along the borders, impacting every aspect of life and livelihood.

On the humanitarian level, contamination is leading to loss of civilian life, disability, psychological problems, and a continuous state of fear and insecurity among affected communities. Economically, mines are not only affecting the wellbeing of residents, but the wellbeing of livestock as well, thus impacting the overall Somali economy, which is largely pastoral. Land available for grazing and farming has been diminished as a result of contamination. Additionally, in certain areas, movement is inhibited and villages are disconnected as roads are closed or suspected to be mined, impacting trade activities with neighboring areas internally as well as across the border.

As you can see, a rapid and targeted humanitarian mine action response is urgently called for in our country. On our end, we are committed to exerting every possible effort and to cooperate with the international community to secure rapid recovery. **In this respect, we are currently in the process of finalizing a three-year national strategy to ensure that all interventions are inter-connected and serve one main mission; we have already held a three-day strategic planning workshop and we hope to finalize the strategy early next year.** We at SEMA pledge to hold ourselves accountable towards our citizens and towards the international community. In this respect, we plan to meet our obligations and submit **Article 7** report on time. Moreover, we will continue participating in all possible international meetings, conferences, and training courses to build our

national capacity and concurrently maintain our connections with the region and internationally. We have started the process of SEMA Legislation, which we hope to accomplish soon.

We trust that our partners and potential partners will provide us with the necessary cooperation and support to ensure that an international response is established and sustained as we work towards achieving a safe and peaceful country. We take this opportunity to extend our gratitude to United Kingdom aid and Norway (NMFA) for their support in building SEMA's national capacity. Concurrently, we cannot but thank German Federal foreign office, WRA, UN agencies, as well as local and international NGOs working with us in Somalia, helping us to fulfill our promise. With your support, we will grow stronger and be born again as a country of peace, hope, and prosperity.

Thank you.