

Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention: 17th Meeting of States Parties

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Statement under Item 7. General exchange of views, Monday 26 November

(Please check against delivery)

The United Kingdom congratulates Afghanistan on its Presidency and offers our ongoing support. The UK also expresses its gratitude to the Implementation Support Unit and to the Coordinators.

Two decades on from the adoption of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, landmines remain a major threat to the physical safety, and the longer-term development of communities. The Convention remains the key framework for addressing these issues.

We look forward to participating actively in this week's meeting, and in particular, on two priority issues.

Firstly, the presentation of the UK's request for an extension to the deadline of our Article 5 obligations. The UK has made significant progress in clearing UK territory contaminated with anti-personnel mines, [*the Falkland Islands*]. The successful completion of this important work is the next step in a process that demonstrates our commitment to upholding our obligations under the Convention.

Secondly, we want to highlight the substantial UK support to international mine action assistance efforts. We will update the Convention on the UK's ongoing activity in this area. At a side event on Tuesday, we will share lessons from the UK's Global Mine Action Programme. The side event will present the findings from the evaluation of the first phase of this Programme, which provided support in Sri Lanka, Mozambique, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, Somalia, South Sudan, Zimbabwe and Burma between 2014 and 2018.

In the last year, the UK has also demonstrated its commitment to the goals of the Convention by hosting a meeting with stakeholders from across the sector at Wilton Park in May. The meeting facilitated discussions around the challenges and opportunities in realising the Maputo Declaration's 2025 aspiration for a mine-free world.

We continue to believe that lasting humanitarian benefit will be achieved by full implementation of the Convention and by its adoption by a greater number of states. The UK calls on any states not already party to accede without delay, and on States Parties to uphold their obligations on mine clearance, stockpile destruction, national implementation measures and on annual reporting.

The UK is also pleased to announce that we have supported the Implementation Support Unit with a voluntary donation of over \$30,000 USD to aid its vital work as a central coordination point for our work. But in order to permit the Convention's valuable work to continue, the UK emphasises that participating states must ensure the full and timely payment of their financial contributions to the Convention.

We look forward to our discussions this week.

Thank you.