

## **Statement by the Committee on Article 5 Implementation - Agenda item 9. b)**

Mr. President,

It has been an honour for Canada to Chair the Committee on Article 5 Implementation this year and to work with Austria, Norway and Zambia as Committee members.

This year the Committee has carried out a number of activities to fulfill its mandate. With restrictions in place due to COVID-19, our focus has been on interactions with mine-affected states and organizations, including through the Article 5 extension request process. We thank these stakeholders for the cooperative dialogue.

As we have heard during the sessions on extension requests, COVID-19 has led to additional delays in the submission of these requests and Article 7 reports, which has not made our work easier. Nonetheless, we have seen progress in the efforts to implement Article 5 of the Convention. It is clear, however, that much work remains to be done, and we need to continue our efforts in a collaborative manner to achieve our goal of a mine-free world.

As we know, some States are requesting extensions beyond 2025. In our view, this remains coherent with the States Parties' commitments, to the extent that these requests are based on realistic planning and current resources. However, the situation can still be improved if states increase their cooperation. Plans developed this year will be updated and can change, for example following an increase in resources or a more precise understanding of the remaining contamination following survey.

The Committee welcomes the efforts of states that have submitted information on their Article 5 obligations, including extension requests, and updated work plans submitted in accordance with past decisions on extension requests.

We also welcome the improvements we have seen in the quality of some extension requests. We appreciate the efforts of states that were able to submit their extension requests and Transparency Reports on time in spite of COVID-19, and efforts of states that worked diligently to provide the information as soon as they could.

I would like to highlight the following:

1. We are encouraged to see that most States Parties continue to submit Article 7 Reports and improve the quality of the information they provide. However, in some cases the information we receive lacks clarity and couple be expanded. The Committee and the ISU continue to offer their assistance in this regard, and we encourage states to take advantage of this support.
2. In some cases, States have not submitted information on implementation in a few years. This makes it impossible for the Committee to assess the status of implementation efforts and does not contribute to a cooperative dialogue. As we decided at the Fourth Review Conference, the President will now engage with states that have not provided information on implementation for more than two years.

3. We noted that a number of States continue to have a large amount of suspected hazardous areas. It is fundamental that these States increase their survey efforts and continue improving their methodologies to acquire an evidence-based baseline for implementation, no later than by the 19<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties in 2021.
4. We recall that States Parties need to apply all provisions of the Convention to all types of anti-personnel mines, including anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature. At the Fourth Review Conference, States Parties recognized that contamination by anti-personnel mines, including those of an improvised nature, continues to pose a threat to human life and impede sustainable development.
5. We welcome that States this year, in particular Mauritania and Nigeria, have acted in accordance with the decisions made by the States Parties regarding situations in which previously unknown or newly mined areas are discovered following completion of Article 5 obligations. It is important to highlight this application of States Parties' decisions, which has set an important example this year.
6. We encourage states to continue sharing information on their implementation of Article 5 and related commitments during both formal and informal meetings, and to take advantage of the Individualised Approach led by the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance. This mechanism can be of significant help to stimulate implementation efforts.
7. We also encourage States Parties to provide more detailed information on the methodologies employed to ensure that mine risk education and reduction programmes are context-specific and take gender, age, disability, and the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities into account. States Parties should also provide information on the challenges faced and the results achieved, disaggregating information by gender, age and other relevant factors. States Parties should also ensure that a national capacity is in place to deliver mine risk education, including through its integration into other national plans.

Having noted these points, I want to thank the Sudanese Presidency for its support to the Committee this year in fulfilling our mandate to intensify Article 5 implementation efforts, and for leading the cooperative exchange between states and other stakeholders on the achievement of our goals.

I would now like address an important decision of the Fourth Review Conference, which was to amend the mandate of each Committee to include the consideration of matters related to gender and the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities in every aspect of its work. Our Committee has made sure to implement this commitment in our activities this year, including by addressing Action 3 of the Oslo Action Plan in our interactions with states, looking at how the different needs and perspectives of women, girls, boys and men are considered and inform implementation efforts. In this regard, I want to thank Norway who has fulfilled the role of Gender Focal Point of the Committee this year. Mr. President, please allow me to now offer the floor to Norway to provide a few remarks in this capacity. Thank you.