



European Union

EU Statement on Mine Clearance (Article 5) 18th Meeting of States Parties Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Geneva, 18 November 2020

Mr. Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. The Candidate Countries Turkey, the Republic of North Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Serbia* and Albania*, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the EFTA country Iceland, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this statement.

The European Union would like to thank the Committee for its work with regard to the implementation of Article 5 and the mine clearance related actions of the Oslo Action Plan.

The EU remains committed to supporting mine clearance activities to help mine-affected States Parties meet their Article 5 obligations under the Convention. More than 30 million EUR of EU assistance for mine action was earmarked for mine clearance in 2019. Mine clearance is very often accompanied by mine risk reduction and education activities in order to prevent new victims. The project activities include support for States Parties to set up a national stakeholder dialogue on mine clearance with national and international stakeholders. Last year, such national stakeholder dialogues took place in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Senegal. The Convention's Committee on Article 5 is involved in the selection of the beneficiary States Parties. In the new Council Decision, a priority for national dialogues will be given to States with upcoming mine clearance deadlines that require support. In addition, dialogues could be held in States that are close to completing mine clearance or have recently done so in line with OAP Action 26.

* The Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

The EU would like to congratulate Chile on accomplishing its mine clearance obligations within the deadline under the Convention and becoming mine-free. Chile has not only achieved a major milestone for the country and for the Latin American continent, but also secured safety for its people and created conditions for further socio-economic development in the country. This should serve as an encouragement and an inspiration for other mine-affected countries to intensify their efforts to complete their time-bound obligations as soon as possible, and to the fullest extent possible by 2025, and bring us closer towards the fulfilment of our shared goal for a world free of anti-personnel mines. We also appreciate and commend the news from the United Kingdom about the completion of its clearance obligations on 14 November 2020.

On a contrasting note, it is disappointing to see lack of Eritrea's progress and engagement with the Committee in implementation of its Article 5 obligations since the Third Review Conference in 2014. The EU believes that it is important for mine-affected States Parties, which are not able to fulfil their mine clearance obligations under Article 5, to indicate and submit in a timely manner by 31 March a request for extension of their mine clearance deadlines, in accordance with the established process. We encourage Eritrea to draw upon the resources of the Implementation Support Unit to develop its request and to submit it without delay in order to avoid a non-compliance with the Convention.

Thank you, Mr. Chair