



Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention 18th Meeting of States Parties

November 2020

Statement on Survey & Clearance

Check Against Delivery

Thank you Mr President.

I want to start by thanking you and the Implementation Support Unit for having changed this meeting to virtual format in such a short timeframe.

This Convention set the bar on the inclusion of expert organisations, civil society and landmine survivors. Our community changed the game. But setting the bar does not stop us from raising it further.

Now that we have shown the value and impact of virtual and hybrid meetings, let's not look forward to going 'back to normal'. Instead, let's make sure normal is more inclusive. More diverse. And more accessible. Let's keep changing the game for the better.

So we call on the incoming Presidency, the Coordinating Committee and States Parties to be propositional, pragmatic and practical in the way you organise disarmament meetings. Let's make the most of every opportunity to be more inclusive and dynamic. You will have our full support and we call on you to be bold.

Mr President,

HALO welcomes the Progress Report's segment on survey and clearance and we congratulate the Committee on Article 5 Implementation on its work. We continue to be firmly of the view that the Committee's work is strengthened by drawing on input from expert organisations, including my own. Please be assured of our continued support.

We also welcome the improving trend in performance outlined in *Clearing the Mines 2020*. As you know, HALO supports the Mine Action Review's work and its approach. Being open to improvement is what has enabled the mine action community to develop to where it is now. The same approach will continue to serve us well, even when it makes for uncomfortable reading.

It is alarming to find that the application of good practice and the absence of contamination baselines continue to hold back many mine action programmes. This shouldn't still be the case. We therefore call on all States Parties to consider, to discuss and to apply the Mine Action Review's assessments and recommendations.

Mr President,

We congratulate Chile and the United Kingdom on their successful fulfilment of Article 5 obligations. And we look forward to congratulating more States Parties as they complete in the future.

In closing, I want to pay tribute to my HALO colleagues across the world who have continued their work during this exceptionally challenging year.

They have they continued survey, clearance, risk education and support to victim assistance. But they have also laid down their demining PPE for medical PPE to support COVID response. They have delivered medical supplies. They have adapted ambulances so they can transport COVID patients to hospitals when no one else could. And they have self-isolated and supported each other.

Over 8,000 of my colleagues across five continents have kept going. Without our mine action colleagues across the world – from all organisations – we would have little to celebrate here.

I ask you to draw on their determination, their innovation and their resolve to deliver on the commitment to complete landmine clearance.

I thank you.

ENDS