



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

November 2020

Statement on International Cooperation & Assistance

Check Against Delivery

Thank you Mr President.

International Cooperation and Assistance has been a cornerstone of this Convention and its work. It has supported survey, clearance and risk education. It has enabled assistance to victims and survivors and led to the destruction of stockpiles. And it has supported the development of good practice and regulatory frameworks.

For that, we join others in expressing thanks to all of HALO's donors, and those of the sector as a whole. Without their support – your support – we would not be where we are, and many lives and limbs would not have been saved. And we are especially grateful for the flexibility and determination shown by our donors during this exceptionally difficult year.

Yet despite donor generosity, our sector continues to face a shortfall in funding, with many states facing this acutely. Analysis by the Landmine Free 2025 Campaign showed that there is a one billion US dollar shortfall for 'legacy contamination' for the 2025 aspiration. And funding is an impediment to mine clearance activities in three quarters of States Parties with Article 5 obligations.

The point is not to say that funding is being allocated to the wrong places. The point is that there is not enough to meet need, or deliver the plans approved by States Parties. That applies to 'legacy contamination'. It also applies to new contamination arising from contemporary conflict that is increasingly complex, protracted and urbanised.

Mr President,

HALO does not simply want to repeat a need for more resources. You have heard that before and it stands as true as it did a year ago when we met in Oslo. Instead, we also call on the sector – all of us – to be more creative. More agile. Even in the face of COVID.

That could take the form of better use of the individualised approach and diplomatic networks. Or applying the Landmine Free 2025 Campaign's proposal to designate 0.7% of national Official Development Assistance to landmine clearance. Or following Angola's example in increasing its allocation of national budget to demining and conservation. It should also involve doing things differently.

HALO also continues to see enormous opportunity in pursuing alternative development finance opportunities to complement existing funding models. This is something States Parties committed to in the Oslo Political Declaration. We are strongly of the view that it could bring new sources of funding to the mine action sector and that this is an area we must explore as a community.

We welcome Angola's inclusion of this in its Article 7 report. And we warmly welcome and commend the United Kingdom's announcement just this morning that it intends to proactively explore and research a broad range of alternative financing options for this sector. HALO assures you of our full support.

HALO looks forward to working with interested states and partners to turn concepts into action, and hope you will join our official side event on alternative finance at 1330 Geneva time.

Mr President, colleagues,

HALO stressed in Oslo last year the importance of remaining relevant. Not just to the communities we work with and the changing need for our work caused by new conflict. But relevant to other agendas and sectors.

We stand by that. And it is why partnership with other sectors – humanitarian response, development, conservation and the environment, and more – is a prominent part of HALO's new strategy for the next five years. We launched this earlier in November and will be happy to share and discuss it with interested states and partners.

We are all aware of the contribution our sector and organisations can make beyond clearance of landmines and unexploded ordnance. We now need to look beyond our sector to demonstrate that. And enhance funding levels, especially as the COVID pandemic strains all national budgets.

But, most importantly, we need to look beyond our sector because it will enhance the impact of what we do.

Thank you.

ENDS