



Permanent Mission of Italy
UN - Geneva

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

International Cooperation and Assistance

Geneva, 16-20 November 2020

Mister President,

Italy remains deeply convinced of the important role of international cooperation and assistance for our common work in the framework of the Convention. For Italy, this is more than a legal obligation. It is a long-standing commitment, as a part of our comprehensive approach to mine action.

A dedicated Trust Fund for Humanitarian Demining was set up by law in 2001, allowing the allocation of resources to mine action projects relating to anti-personnel landmines and explosive remnants of war. Since then, Italy has devoted more than 62 million Euros to Mine Action programmes, with a particular focus on clearance, stockpile destruction, risk education and assistance to victims.

Mister President,

We are aware of the challenges that many countries – including Italy – are facing because of the current pandemic. However, we decided not to diminish the level of our commitment and, for 2020, a total of 4 million euros are being allocated to humanitarian mine action programmes.

During this year, Italy is continuing to support UNMAS activities in Iraq, Libya, Palestine, Sudan and Syria, relating to clearance, mine-risk education and survivor and indirect victim assistance. Our country is also contributing to ICRC activities in Afghanistan, relating to survivors' physical rehabilitation and socio-economic reintegration.

Moreover, the Italian Cooperation works together with UNDP in Yemen, for national mine action capacity development and related technical support for detection and clearance operations, and with the WHO in Somalia, for physical rehabilitation of mine survivors.

Finally, Italy is supporting the OAS in Colombia, for activities relating to psycho-social and reinsertion assistance to ERW survivors, and the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center in Cambodia. Moreover, through the Italo-Latin American Organization (IILA) is providing technical assistance and training for demining activities in Colombia and Peru.

Mister President,

In carrying out these activities, we strongly believe that international assistance should not be limited to financial support, but should also include, to the extent possible, the sharing of experience, knowledge, and practical know-how. On this point, let me recall the involvement of the Italian Armed Forces operating abroad in clearance of improvised explosive devices and explosive ordnance disposals, and the support of a dedicated national Centre of Excellence for countering all types of explosives devices, which has also been engaged in training and capacity building activities with third countries.

Our collaboration with several actors in the implementation of their integrated mine action programs also shows the Italian commitment for multilateralism. Such partnerships – at all levels, with the UN, other international and regional organizations, civil society and survivors' organizations – are an effective way to fully implement the Convention, maximizing the contribution and impact of all the available expertise and knowledge.

Before concluding, Mr. President, I would like to stress that the notions of "national ownership" and "donor coordination" are two key tenets of Italian Cooperation, including in humanitarian demining. Therefore, we greatly value initiatives such as the Country Coalition as well as the Individualized Approach, which translate these two notions into practice also in the framework of Mine Action. For this reason, we welcome the activities that have been conducted in their implementation.

Italy stands ready to contribute to all such efforts, geared towards enhancing the effectiveness of international assistance through greater coordination among all relevant stakeholders and at all levels, from multilateral to local.

Thank you, Mister President.