



**Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
3rd Pledging Conference
Geneva, 27 February 2018**

**Statement by Ambassador Gianfranco Incarnato
Permanent Representative of Italy to the Conference on Disarmament**

Madam President,

First of all, let me to congratulate you on assuming the Presidency of the Anti-Personnel Landmine Convention, and to commend you for organizing this Pledging Conference. I am sure that it will replicate the success of the two previous ones, in allowing the Implementation Support Unit to operate in a more stable and predictable environment.

Madam President,

Last year we celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Convention and the many achievements we have accomplished in the last two decades. Looking back at 1997, the progress we attained is outstanding. Yet, there is no time for complacency: as new challenges emerge – such as those posed by Improvised Explosive Devices – “old” ones need to be conclusively met. The awareness of the drastic short and long-term humanitarian consequences of anti-personnel mines pushes us to look ahead and to take joint action for the full implementation of all the Convention’s provisions.

As we strive to translate the goal of a mine-free world into a reality, the assistance and backing of the Implementation Support Unit will remain indispensable. We highly value the professional, qualified and skilled work conducted by the ISU staff.

Italy has been a long-standing supporter of the Implementation Support Unit. We are satisfied that the financial difficulties it faced in the past are now overcome and would like to express once again our appreciation for the measures adopted under the Belgian Presidency in 2015, which allowed to strengthen its financial governance. We particularly welcome that current resources will allow the ISU to perform “enhanced support” activities in the area of Victim Assistance, which for us, as for many States Parties, remains a key priority.

Madam President,

If we compare this success story with what happened within the CCW at the end of last year, when the contracts of the Convention’s ISU staff had to be terminated due to the lack of sufficient funds, there is an important conclusion that we can reach: the key to ensure the sustainability of the ISU is not a financing model based on mandatory contributions. Sustainability relies on ownership.

In this regard, we are concerned that in 2017 contributions to the ISU were made by fewer than one/sixth of the States Parties. We believe that all States members in a possibility to do so have a moral obligation to contributing to provide the Unit with adequate resources.

Sustainability also relies on the effective use of available resources. In this regard, Italy will continue to encourage any possible cooperation among Conventions when thematic overlaps emerge, and to promote a cross-convention approach in the fulfillment of related obligations. We also continue to encourage the ISU to further pursue such forms of cooperation with other implementation support units, whenever possible.

Madam President,

Since I have mentioned resources, let me announce that Italy will support ISU activities also in the current year. We are firmly intentioned to keep our financial contribution at the same level as last year, amounting to 57.500 euros.

This contribution will be part of our wider efforts to support mine action activities, to which we will allocate an overall amount of financial assistance similar to that of last year (3,5 million euros), or even slightly higher, through a specifically dedicated Fund.

In addition to that, further resources will be conveyed to mine action, notably to Victim Assistance and mine risk education programs. In this context, for example, last year Italy decided to fund with 3 Million Euro over 3 years the “Program for Humanitarian Impact Investment”. This program - implemented with the International Committee of the Red Cross, other donors and private sector partners - will allow us to build 3 rehabilitation centers in favor of persons with disabilities, including mine-victims, in 3 countries in Africa: Mali, Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Thank you.