

Fourth Review Conference  
Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention

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Mr President,

Let me begin by thanking the government of Norway for generously hosting this conference, and you, Mr President, your team, and the Implementation Support Unit for the excellent preparations throughout the Norwegian presidency.

It is a great pleasure to be here today to mark the first 20 years of the Mine Ban Convention – a landmark treaty and a testament to what multilateral disarmament diplomacy at its best can accomplish. In today's international environment, with established arms control instruments and multilateralism itself under growing strain, success stories such as this one are more important than ever.

The Convention, in its 20 years, has not only established a global norm, but also brought concrete benefits for thousands of people around the globe – immediate, and long-term.

Mine action is first and foremost humanitarian action. It is about saving lives and bringing immediate relief to people suffering from conflicts. But it is also about development – an essential prerequisite for economic and social development post-conflict. And, as the UN Secretary-General highlighted in his Disarmament Agenda, mine action also has a direct link to sustaining peace. Mine action, in fact, is a perfect example of the nexus between security, development and rights – in this case, the most important right of all: the right to life.

Mr President,

Under this agenda item, we have been asked to outline our vision for the future of the Convention. For Finland, the vision is clear: a mine free world, the goal we have all committed to under the convention.

Over the past 20 years, we have come a long way in realising this vision. Our successes can be measured in square kilometres of land cleared and in numbers of stockpiled mines destroyed, in numbers of victims assisted and populations educated about mine risks.

And yet, we still have far to go. New contamination still occurs, and new obstacles to the delivery of humanitarian aid are witnessed especially in Syria and Yemen. Elaborate new forms of IEDs are a treacherous threat to civilians and deminers alike. Most alarmingly, the number of casualties caused by mines and explosives is again on the rise – with children all too often paying the highest price.





What, then, do we need to bring us closer to our vision?

First, political will. Commitment to the goals of the convention, full compliance and effective implementation of all its provisions. Political will should also translate into concrete resources, to financial investment in implementation on the ground.

Secondly, partnerships. Partnerships between and among governments, international organisations and NGOs. National ownership and international cooperation are key to effective – and cost-effective – implementation.

Thirdly, inclusiveness. All parts of society can and should be able to participate. Victims and survivors should be fully and equally included in the planning and conduct of all activities.

And fourth, we should continue to strive for universal adherence to the convention. We encourage all States not yet parties, to join the Convention without delay.

To make progress we also need the right tools for our work. The draft Oslo Action Plan is just such a tool – a roadmap for our work, and with its indicators, a yardstick to measure progress made along the way.

Promoting a comprehensive consideration of gender in all aspects of mine action is a key element of the draft Action Plan. It is also central to Finnish humanitarian mine assistance. It is therefore a great pleasure for me to present the working paper entitled *How to implement and monitor gender mainstreaming in the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention* on behalf of a group of countries: Albania, Angola, Australia, Austria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxemburg, Montenegro, The Netherlands, Norway, Panama, Peru, Romania, Slovenia, Sudan, Sweden, United Kingdom, Uruguay, and my own country, Finland.

The Working Paper outlines a set of practical recommendations in support of the Action Plan, which States Parties can implement to facilitate systematic work and reporting on gender mainstreaming. It is our ambition that by setting the bar high on gender mainstreaming in the Convention, States Parties will not only improve practical implementation in the field, but also set a positive example for the entire disarmament sector.

Mr President,

Finland has been a steadfast supporter of international humanitarian mine action for close to thirty years. Our assistance is based on three key principles: It is comprehensive, comprising all five pillars of humanitarian mine action: clearance, risk education, victim assistance, stockpile destruction and advocacy. It focuses on fragile environments where mines and explosives pose significant obstacles to peace and security, and it is consistent, based on multi-annual contracts with trusted IGO/NGO partners.

Our support during 2016–2020 is directed towards work in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Somalia and Ukraine. Almost half of our 12 million euros of funding is targeted to support activities in Iraq and Syria in areas liberated from ISIS. In Ukraine, demining also supports a political objective, that of disengagement in Eastern Ukraine.



We are currently preparing an additional 600 000 euros of assistance for mine clearance in Ukraine, and planning is underway for an overall increase of funding in the next funding cycle.

Mr President,

None of the gains made so far would have been possible without the courageous work of the dedicated professionals in the field. In celebrating the Convention, we celebrate above all their achievements. Many of them are present here today. A heartfelt thank you to all of you.

Mr President, dear colleagues,

We have a vision, and we have the tools needed to make it a reality. Finland looks forward to working with all partners to achieve our common aims: saving lives, protecting people, assisting victims, enabling development, and sustaining peace.

Thank you, Mr President.