



Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention

Fourth Review Conference

25-29 November 2019, Oslo

Statement on Review of the Operation and Status of the Convention: Clearing Mined Areas

Agenda Item 7(c)

(Check Against Delivery)

Mr President,

Thank you for giving me the floor.

Firstly, MAG commends you on the way you have engaged operational NGOs in your preparations for this meeting. You have drawn on our individual and collective knowledge and experience, and you have helped and challenged us to think differently. We truly achieve more when we work together, challenge ourselves and think outside of the box.

The clearance of mined areas remains a cornerstone of this Convention and we have seen huge progress over the last two decades. 32 States Parties completed mine clearance, while others having cleared thousands of square kilometres of land. Together, the mine action community has saved countless lives and limbs and helped communities build safer futures.

We are grateful to the donors who have supported this, many of whom are in the room. But our greatest debt of gratitude is to our colleagues in mine action programmes across the globe. To echo the words of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, they are our real heroes. Without them, there would be no clearance successes to celebrate in this room. As we all step up our efforts to achieve completion and a landmine free 2025, we need to start planning now to ensure they have future careers and dignity in retirement.

We must also ensure that completion of clearance is sensitive to the enduring needs of victims, survivors and their families, whose needs endure for life. This will also depend on a new way of working between the clearance and victim assistance communities. We need to start working closer together, and start needs to start today.

Distinguished delegates,

The Oslo Action Plan brings risk education to the fore, which is long overdue and a hugely positive development. Risk education continues to save thousands of lives and limbs across the globe, yet the pillars of mine action are intended to work together. We therefore call on all states to include risk

education in their national plans strategies, Article 5 extension and Article 7 reporting. And we call on the Article 5 Committee to keep the issue at the forefront of their work.

Mr President,

This community has all the tools it needs to succeed. We have improved our methodologies based on the lessons we have learned, adapted our approaches in the face of a new landmine emergency and linked mine action to humanitarian response plans. But we now need to work even harder.

No country is ranked 'very good' in this year's *Clearing the Mines*, published by the Mine Action Review. Every state should have that ranking. That is why we call on everyone to take on board the recommendations of the *Clearing the Mines* and we call on donors to support the Mine Action Review.

Mr President,

This community shares a common vision for a Landmine Free 2025. Achieving this goal depends on teamwork, and there is no room for ego. It depends on ambition, even in the face of challenge. And it depends on transparency, even when that involves acknowledging and rectifying mistakes.

I have worked in Angola for a decade, five of which have been dedicated to mine action. Over these years, I seen first-hand the transformation benefits that come from working together – with partners at The HALO Trust, Norwegian People's Aid and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, the government of Angola itself and a group of engaged and committed diplomats. We are genuinely a team working to support an Angola free from landmines by 2025.

Mr President, colleagues, friends,

The mine action community faces a \$1bn funding shortfall for so-called legacy funding. With mine action receiving only 0.4% of Official Overseas Development Assistance, you can afford it. And 60 million people cannot afford for you to turn your back on them.

Let us do everything we can and more to make the next five years a success.

I thank you Mr President.

ENDS