

Statement on International Cooperation and Assistance
Fourth Review Conference of the States Parties to the
Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
25-29 November 2019



Mr. President,

Over the past two decades, international cooperation and assistance have been pivotal in supporting the implementation of the Treaty, and remain so today.

Since the treaty came into force, donors and affected states contributed more than 10 billion dollars in combined international and national support, including \$700 million last year alone. This demonstrates the strong spirit of cooperation we have built over the years.

But numbers don't tell the whole story, however impressive they may be. We need to consider whether assistance is being fairly distributed, is effective and coherent, is used in the best possible way and is delivering tangible results on the ground.

On where the money is going, the well-established trend of a small group of countries receiving the majority of the funding remains unchanged. In 2018, the top five recipient countries received more than half of all international support. Countries facing massive or new contamination certainly need to receive adequate levels of support. But donors should not lose sight of the importance of ensuring that **all** states with various levels of contamination and in need of assistance get the support they require to achieve completion in the shortest possible time.

At the same time, while international support for victim assistance increased by \$17 million in 2018, most of the increase was directed towards four states only (Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and Yemen). We also note with concern that a continuous decline was recorded for most of the other recipients, with visible effects on the provision of essential services. States Parties should make sure that victim assistance activities get sufficient levels in order to benefit all survivors and indirect victims.

Let us not forget that all affected countries deserve support whether for clearance or victim assistance. The success of the treaty will be assessed by how

well we deal with both the legacy problems and how we respond to current humanitarian crises.

On the issues of quality and impact of international assistance, the Oslo Action Plan contains measures to allow for more targeted assistance and better coordination among all stakeholders. In particular, we want to stress the need for:

1. Detailed and regular data reporting on results achieved, remaining tasks, and needs for assistance. This is critical to any efficient mine action programming. In this sense, article 7 transparency reports and meetings such as today's conference are indispensable tools for information exchange.
2. Constant and direct engagement between affected states, the donor community, and service providers. The individualized approach offers a valuable platform/format for affected states to take stock of outstanding issues, monitor progress on mine action planning and implementation, as well as facilitate potential new partnerships towards completion.
3. Enhanced coordination between donors and with mine action implementors to reduce inefficiencies, identify gaps and avoid duplication of efforts and resources.

Mr. President, twenty years ago the international community decided to rid the world of landmines and address their legacy. This conference provides the perfect opportunity to come up with the most appropriate action points to maximize the impact of cooperation and assistance and to turn our word into action. There is no time to waste.