



**Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, Fourth Review Conference
25-29 November 2019, Oslo**

International Cooperation & Assistance Opening Remarks

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(Check Against Delivery)

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, friends

During the course of this week we have been challenged. Challenged to improve, to do more and to do it faster, challenged to keep up with the old and adapt to the new.

This Review Conference sets a new standard by which we should hold ourselves, and each other, to account, with a clear action plan and measurable indicators of success.

But as many delegates have highlighted, the elephant in the room is how are we going to afford everything that we plan to achieve over the next five years, and beyond. Where states require increased financial assistance to complete by their A5 deadlines, where is this going to come from?

In the last 10 years mine action has received a collective \$5.5 billion in international assistance. Funding peaked at its highest yet in 2017, however, that was acknowledged as an anomaly in response to a new landmine emergency in the Middle East.

As highlighted by the 2019 Landmine Monitor, there are several inequalities in the way funding is received and dispersed:

- The top 5 donors to mine action give 71% of the total international funding.
- 55% of all funding went to 5 countries alone, leaving the remaining funding to be split across 36 affected countries and territories - 26 of which are States Parties where a lack of international funding is a significant challenge to completion.
- Domestic contributions currently amount to 13% of total funding to mine action

It's important to remember that some of the largest donors are not states parties. Without them we would not be able to report the success we have collectively achieved to date.

Distinguished Delegates,

While the funding gap is large, there is still room for optimism, to see as many states as possible complete by 2025. In 2018 mine action funding constituted only 0.4% of overseas development assistance. This can and should be increased. We know that what we deliver in mine action is tangible, measurable, and can achieve economies of scale. The wide range of benefits that mine action has appeals to a broad audience, both public and private and shows the essential impact of mine action in humanitarian protection, sustainable development and stabilization efforts.

It is increasingly important that we convey this message to a wide variety of traditional mine action and non-traditional donors. It is all about relevance. We need to articulate the relevance of mine action to the Sustainable Development Goals and humanitarian protection needs, and ensure it is integrated into both national development and humanitarian response plans.

And while we improve the way we communicate about mine action, we will also need to embrace innovative thinking and leverage new funding modalities to fill the funding gap as soon as possible. Mechanisms such as the SDG bonds and impact bonds are prime examples of new methods that could create the gear change that we seek in order to achieve as much as possible by 2025 and realise the Oslo Action Plan.

Thank you.

Distinguished Delegates,

“Completion is important, but how we get there also matters.” This phrase was developed by the NGO Gender Working Group, formed in 2019 for this meeting. It has become one of the key phrases associated with the Review Conference and the path before us. It is relevant to everything we do, especially international cooperation and assistance.

When it comes to gender, we have seen huge strides forward, with gender coming out of side events and into the plenary, the Oslo Action Plan and the Convention’s machinery itself. We all need to do everything we can to seize the opportunity this gives us. Only then can mine action benefit women and men equally, and achieve equity in policy and decision making.

Our progress on gender has shown how much more we need to do in our understanding of – and work on – diversity. But we should embrace this as a positive development. Just like in mine clearance, an accurate baseline is essential to determine a plan.

Camille has outlined funding achievements, challenges and opportunities, especially through funding escalation, diversification and innovation. An under-funded and an unequally funded mine action sector cannot possibly succeed. And so I add my voice to hers in calling on you to follow those States Parties who are showing leadership in funding the clearance of forgotten minefields. And we call on all of you to explore all ways of doing that, and harness all opportunities available to think outside of the box.

Distinguished Delegates,

We all know that International Cooperation and Assistance is about much more than funding. It is about how states work with each other, with this community and with other stakeholders. In-country teamwork and cooperation between stakeholders – whatever we call it – has shown that it yields results. The Individualised Approach, developed since the last Review Conference, is one model that works, and we commend The Netherlands for their role in that. But the principle and approach is more important than the name.

So we call on you to come together in countries. Identify what can change and how to change it. Use the Mine Action Review and apply its recommendations. And create collective, country-specific advocacy plans that are relevant to other sectors as well as our own. Think big and be willing to think differently, even when it feels uncomfortable. Only then will we discover the new ideas and strategies we need to succeed.

The individualised approach has worked precisely because it unites a team behind a shared mission and a common goal. In the stormy waters of disagreement and challenge, that common goal is our life raft. And it is something to hold us together when we need to face up to mistakes, address new challenges or explore new ways of doing things.

Distinguished delegates, friends,

International Cooperation and Assistance is a success and we should rightly celebrate what has been achieved. But let's not become complacent. Instead, let's find the funding needed to make progress towards a landmine free 2025. Let's identify what we can all do better, and then do it. Let's make sure we challenge ourselves and each other. And let's find new ways of being relevant to the environment, sustainable development and humanitarian protection.

Most importantly, let's hold ourselves and each other to account. Transparency, honesty and measurability are the only way forward.

When we need to let's call it out and let's be bold.

And, when things are difficult or uncomfortable, let's be thankful that we have such a clear and common goal to unite us.

Thank you.

ENDS