

Statement on Clearance
Fifteenth Meeting of States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty
Santiago, Chile, 28 November – 1 December 2016



Thank you Madam Chair.

We often get asked: what is needed to reach the goal of completing mine clearance in 2025? The Maputo Action Plan was drafted with great care. It says:

- First: identify the precise perimeters and locations of areas that are suspected or confirmed to contain mines. At the moment, at least 18 States Parties are far from having a full picture of contamination.
- Second: apply the most relevant land release standards and methodologies. Almost all States Parties implemented systematic survey and clearance in 2015, but the degree to which these were aligned with the International Mine Action Standards varied.
- Third: tailor mine risk education to the needs of affected communities and integrate it into ongoing mine action activities.
- Fourth: ensure the quality of extension requests, and continue to engage with states after the extension is granted.

Madam Chair -- In 2015, it seems there was no systematic survey or clearance in Ethiopia, Senegal, Turkey, and Yemen. No specific data was available on survey and clearance in Eritrea, Nigeria, and Ukraine. Twelve States Parties with contamination did not submit an Article 7 report. There was increased use of improvised mines by non-state armed groups in the Middle East and elsewhere. Funding for mine action fell to its lowest level in ten years, which badly affected programs in some countries -- like Afghanistan, where the clearance outputs dropped by 40%.

In light of all this, is it still possible to reach the goal of 2025? Yes, it is. What we need is: political will, a commitment to using best practice to avoid wasting resources, and sufficient funding dedicated to the 2025 goal. We also need a country-by-country approach to precisely identify unique challenges and solutions. We remind all stakeholders to consider assessments of and recommendations for national mine action programs as found in "Clearing the Mines 2016", a publication of the Mine Action Review, and in the Landmine Monitor.

As states approach completion of Article 5, this community needs to pay increased attention to the issue of residual risk, and should discuss ways to ensure adequate national capacity to deal with this.

Dear delegates – There is not that much time left before 2025. Non-governmental organizations are fully disposed to contribute, but the ball is in the states' court. Will you continue to grant long extension requests that do not even comprise a work plan? Will you accept that some states with contamination do not report any survey or clearance for many years in a row? Or will you rather build trust, engage in meaningful partnerships for completion, and provide multi-year funding...?

Thank you.