



Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
17th Meeting of the States Parties
Geneva, 26-30 November 2018

Statement by HE Ambassador Gianfranco Incarnato
Permanent Representative of Italy to the Conference on Disarmament
General Debate

Madam President,

At the outset, let me warmly congratulate you for assuming the Presidency of the 17th Meeting of the State Parties of the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention and assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation.

Let me also thank the Convention Committees, the Implementation Support Unit, and civil society for their effective contribution to preparations for this meeting.

Madam President,

While we welcome the increase of the number of States Parties of the APMBC to 164, we regret that a number of Countries are not yet a Party to it, including major anti-personnel landmine possessors and producers. We still believe that universalization remains of key importance for the effective implementation of the Convention.

According to the 2018 Landmine Monitor, antipersonnel mines have been recently used by the government forces of one country which is not party to the Convention and by non-state armed groups in at least eight countries. Unconfirmed allegations concern the use of antipersonnel mines by Daesh in Syria and Iraq, and by other non-state armed groups in 7 other countries. In 2017, the Monitor recorded 7.239 casualties of landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW), which included 2.793 deaths. As in past years, civilians represented the vast majority of the victims.

Although these figures mark a decrease compared with the casualties recorded for 2016, for the second year in a row, the highest numbers were recorded for casualties caused by improvised mines (2.716) and for child casualties (2.452).

Italy is deeply concerned by these reports, which further demonstrate the importance of promoting universal adherence to the Convention and its full implementation. We therefore reiterate our firm condemnation of the use of anti-personnel mines by any actor, and urge all States and non-State actors to refrain from it.

The above mentioned figures also underscore that new challenges and threats are emerging, such as those posed by Improvised Explosive Devices or by the continued production, use, and stockpiling of anti-personnel mines. We are convinced that there is still ground to be covered in order to cope with these challenges and reach the goal of a mine-free world: first of all, our aim remains to fulfill the pledge to complete our major treaty obligations by 2025, as agreed in the 2014 Maputo Declaration.

In this framework, let me take this opportunity to commend the engagement of the Committee on Cooperative Compliance in a continued dialogue with State Parties confronted with allegations of use

of anti-personnel mines.

Madam President,

Clearing contaminated land will contribute to avoiding the increase in the number of landmine victims. In this regard, compliance with art. V is key. We understand the challenges faced by affected Countries, and stand ready to assist them in delivering on their commitments. When deadlines cannot be met, we encourage concerned States to follow the established procedure, by submitting a motivated request for obtaining an extension. Only the framework set to this end by the Convention will allow for the necessary balance between obligations and unforeseen circumstances, preserving the integrity of the Convention itself.

In this regard, Italy welcomes the submission of extension requests or additional information to the earlier ones by several States Parties, particularly the extension request submitted by Ukraine.

We commend the efforts of the Committee on art. V implementation and we look forward to the discussion of its report. Also, Italy welcomes that, of the 31 State Parties in the process of fulfilling obligations under art. V, 28 submitted art. 7 transparency reports containing updated information on related efforts, marking an increase in the number of reports submitted to date.

Madam President,

Italy has met its Convention obligations at the national level and continues to attach great importance to its responsibility to provide technical, material, and financial assistance to States Parties still affected by antipersonnel mines. Since the institution of the “Italian Humanitarian Mine Action Fund” by Law n. 58/2001, the Italian Cooperation has devoted close to 55m EUR to Humanitarian Mine Action programmes, focusing on clearance, stockpile destruction, risk education and victim assistance. In 2017, recipients included Afghanistan, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Gaza Strip, Libya, Somalia and Sudan, for an overall amount of 3,3 million euros. In 2018, we have allocated a total of 3,7 million euros to humanitarian mine action programmes.

My delegation will further elaborate on the topics of Victim Assistance and of International Cooperation and Assistance under the related agenda items later this week.

Madam President,

Italy believes it would be useful to further explore possible synergies among the Ottawa Convention and other relevant instruments, in particular the CCM and Protocol V of the CCW. This would ensure more coherent, cost-effective and efficient implementation approaches across these instruments.

Finally, we believe it is of the utmost importance to ensure the financial predictability and sustainability of the Convention, to avoid further cost-cutting measures and shortenings of the Meeting of States Parties. We recall that States have an obligation to pay for assessed contributions as per art. 14 of the Convention. We therefore call on all States Parties to do so in full and on time and, where applicable, to settle their arrears.

Thank you, Madam President.