



Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Intersessional Meeting
Geneva, 7-8 June 2018

Statement by the Delegation of Italy
International Cooperation and Assistance

Madam Chair,

First of all, I would like to join other delegations in expressing our appreciation for the work conducted by the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance.

Italy aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union. I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

Madam Chair,

Achieving a world free of mines by 2025 is an ambitious goal, requiring continued commitment from all relevant stakeholders to fully implement the Convention's provisions as well as to find adequate responses to emerging challenges, such as those posed by Improvised Explosive Devices.

In this regard, international cooperation and assistance is essential, as well as any effort aimed at enhancing its effectiveness.

We therefore continue to support the Committee's activities within the framework of the individualized approach that, in our view, has proved to be a valuable means to foster dialogue and coordination among mine-affected States, donor countries, and implementing organizations. We congratulate Serbia and Sri Lanka for launching their individualized approach platform at this meeting.

Madam Chair,

Italy firmly believes that efforts aimed at enhancing international cooperation and assistance should be based on the principle that humanitarian demining is not only a tool for the protection of individuals' and communities' safety and security, but also a necessary step towards sustainable development. Therefore, we believe that affected Countries should make an effort to integrate Mine Action in their National Development policies, and donor Countries should overcome the traditional silo approach in order to include humanitarian demining into the broader framework of development projects and related funding.

In this regard, we share the conclusions of the study conducted by the GICHD, in cooperation with UNDP and with the Italian financial support, entitled "Leaving No One Behind: Mine Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", which was presented during last year's intersessional meeting. We are determined to work in order to translate the results of this study into concrete initiatives, also by continuing our cooperation with the GICHD.

We fully support the action of the Committee aimed at stressing the relevance of gender also in the framework of the activities related to International Cooperation and Assistance. Italy is firmly convinced of the importance of including a gender perspective in mine action activities, with the broader aim of ensuring that all diversity aspects are taken into account in mine action interventions and that affected women, girls, boys and men benefit on an equal basis from mine action activities.

Madam Chair,

Italy is strongly engaged in cooperation and assistance activities to promote the fulfillment of the Convention's goals.

In 2001 we established a Fund specifically designated to support mine action activities. Since the creation of this Fund, we have allocated almost 55 million EUR to integrated mine action programmes; countries in which we have implemented such activities include Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Palestine, Somalia, and Sudan.

Italian mine action has particularly focused on clearance, stockpile destruction, victims assistance and mine-risk education. In addition to providing financial support, Italy has also shared expertise, technical know-how and experience. The Italian Armed Forces, for instance, have been directly involved in extensive clearance of explosive remnants of war in Afghanistan and Lebanon.

Allocation of resources for 2018 is currently being finalized, and we are not yet in a position to provide exact figures. However, we expect that the overall amount of mine action funds for this year will be equal, or even slightly higher, than in 2017.

Cooperation with long-standing partners, such as UNMAS, the ICRC, the GICHD, and the Italian Section of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines will be confirmed, as well as traditional geographic and thematic areas of intervention.

Italy has also been a long-standing supporter of the Implementation Support Unit of the APMBC, whose role has been central in assisting States Parties with implementing the Convention's provisions and in promoting universalization. In 2018, our financial support to the ISU will continue unchanged.

Thank you, Madam Chair