



**Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
15th Meeting of the States Parties**

*Santiago de Chile
28 November - 1 December 2016*

International Cooperation and Assistance

Statement by Ms. Palma D'Ambrosio, Italian Delegation

Madam President,

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, and for the conclusions and recommendations submitted to this Meeting.

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

Madam President,

The Third Review Conference in Maputo reaffirmed our commitment to ending the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel mines for all people at all time, and our aspiration to end the era of anti-personnel mines.

In order to make that aspiration a reality, enhanced international cooperation and assistance as envisaged by Article 6 is essential. Italy is ready to take on this commitment in full.

Italy is no longer directly affected by the plight of anti-personnel landmines, but is keenly aware of their devastating impacts on the daily lives of many people and communities around the world. For this reason, we established a Fund specifically designated to support mine action activities financed - up to the current year - with a total amount of almost 50 million Euros.

Allocation of funds for 2016 was finalized earlier this month. Cooperation with long-standing partners, such as UNMAS, the ICRC, the GICHD and the Italian Section of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines was confirmed, as well as our commitment towards traditional areas and Countries of intervention. These include Bosnia-Herzegovina, Colombia, the Gaza Strip, Sudan, Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia. Through these funds, we have allocated a substantial contribution to the Implementation Support Unit of the APMBC also in the current year.

In addition to financial resources we directly provide to mine action projects, we are engaged with our partners in efforts aimed at making financial allocations to mine action more efficient and effective, including by enhancing coordination and information exchange among donors. This is a key priority of our Chairmanship of the Mine Action Support Group, which we assumed last January.

In light of what I have just said, we fully support the conclusion, embodied in the report by the Committee, that international cooperation and assistance is a crucial part of the Convention and represents a key component to ensure its full implementation. We also agree that a more comprehensive approach is needed to progress resolutely towards the accomplishment of the goals set in Maputo. We look forward to the preliminary observations that the Committee will present at the 2017 Intersessional Meeting on how to develop this approach and we stand ready to participate in this endeavor.

In this regard, and as a preliminary contribution to the debate, I would like to make a few points on how we try to translate “comprehensiveness” in the design and implementation of our cooperation and assistance activities in mine action. First, fully in line with the provisions of the Maputo Action Plan, Italy relies on partnerships at all levels as an effective way to fully implement the Convention. We are convinced that partnerships need to be developed and strengthened, among States and with the UN, other international and regional organizations, civil society organizations, survivors and their representative organizations, in order to allow for the inclusion of all relevant actors and stakeholders, thus maximizing the contribution and impact of all the available expertise and knowledge.

Also, these partnerships should be regarded as an even more fundamental tool when we look at mine action “comprehensively”, as a multifaceted set of activities, ranging from humanitarian demining to victim assistance, from advocacy efforts to risk education.

Moreover, we fully share the view that cooperation and assistance is not only about providing funds. It also means sharing experience and know-how. In this perspective, I would like to highlight the extensive clearance of explosive remnants of war conducted by the Italian Armed Forces operating abroad, notably in Afghanistan and Lebanon.

Madam President,

We also agree that the mapping of needs and challenges is a necessary basis to identify implementation gaps and consequent necessary action. In this sense, we encourage States Parties seeking assistance to share their needs through their Article 7 reports, and to do so in a way as precise and detailed as possible.

In addition, and from a donor’s perspective, we think that statements delivered during our assemblies, as well as bilateral meetings at their margins, could also be very useful. Building on this, and in order to make the most of the occasions when all the membership is gathered together, we read with great interest the proposal for an “individualized approach”, as described

in Annex 1 to the Committee's report. In this regard, we highlight the importance of granting access to the proposed additional format for information exchange to all States wishing to avail themselves of this opportunity. Also, we think that the potential impact of the recurrent use of this format on the ISU's allocation of time and human resources should be taken into account, given the fact that the Unit's involvement is envisaged.

We fully concur with the Committee's conclusion that the work related to the enhancement of cooperation and assistance is not limited to the activity of this Committee, and that the Committee needs to coordinate both with other Committees under the Ottawa Convention and with other committees under other conventions. Since experiences of cooperation across regimes have been so far very positive, as we have witnessed also during this MSP, we would like to see this last point properly reflected also in the recommendations section of the Committee's report.

Before concluding, Madam President,

allow me to highlight a crosscutting issue that should receive proper attention also in the framework of the activities of the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance. Italy is well aware of the importance of including a gender perspective in mine action activities. From a narrow perspective, evidence tells us that women and girls are affected in a different way than men and boys by the inhuman effects of mines, cluster munitions and ERW and their specific needs should therefore be taken into proper consideration. In a wider perspective, we have to ensure that relevant gender and 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. To this aim, we have established this year a partnership with the "Gender in Mine Action Programme" (GMAP).

We hope that it will be fruitful and we look forward to sharing with the membership the first outcome of this initiative.

Thank you.