



Permanent Mission of Italy
UN - Geneva

Meeting of States Parties

Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention

International Cooperation and Assistance

Geneva, 23 November 2023

Mr. President,

At the outset, let me congratulate you on your efforts to strengthen the implementation of the Convention and the Oslo Action Plan, including on international cooperation and assistance. I would also like to thank Thailand as Chair of the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance for the work conducted through this year.

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

Achieving a world free of mines by 2025 is an ambitious goal, requiring continuous commitment from all relevant stakeholders. International cooperation and assistance are in this regard crucial.

To this end, Italy is very proud to chair in 2023-2024 the Mine Action Support Group (MASG) which coordinates at global level the humanitarian mine action programs, harmonizes priorities and increases donor support in the sector.

In Italy a dedicated Fund for Humanitarian Demining was set up by law in 2001, allowing the allocation of resources to mine action projects relating to anti-personnel landmines and explosive remnants of war. In 2022 we kept the level of funds at approximately 8.5 million and recommitted to the same amount for 2023. These funds allowed us to confirm our commitment to humanitarian demining in Countries where we were already present as well as carry out humanitarian activities in newly identified areas of intervention. Our projects have a holistic

approach including clearance, risk education and assistance to victims, paying particular attention to the social-economic dimension of mine action.

The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) has been a long standing partner of Italy for the implementation of activities related to Explosive Ordnance Risk Education-EORE; the strengthening of the Convention ISU; and more broadly humanitarian demining with a special focus on sustainable development, gender and diversity.

Over the course of last year, Italy supported the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) through the so called “Special Call for Demining and Disability in Afghanistan” which aims at guaranteeing and enhancing the access to high quality services and care for people with disabilities, including those living in remote areas. We have also supported the same organization in Mali and Somalia in order to provide assistance and rehabilitation to vulnerable people.

In recent years, we have also supported the work of UNMAS in Palestine, Syria, Iraq. Our funds contributed inter alia to the training of humanitarian operators and to risk education activities. Activities of clearance, training and awareness raising through the support of mass media were conducted in Iraq.

Following the illegal, unprovoked and unjustified aggression by the Russian Federation, Ukraine is now one of the most contaminated countries in the world. Demining in Ukraine must be a top priority for the international community and Italy is ready to contribute to demining efforts in the country.

Mister President,

We strengthen multilateralism by empowering collaborations with the UN, other international and regional organizations, civil society and survivors’ organizations in the implementation of their integrated mine action programs that we deem an effective way to fully implement the Convention, maximizing the contribution and impact of all the available expertise and knowledge.

Before concluding, Mr. President, I would like to stress that the notions of “national ownership” and “donor coordination” are two key tenets of Italian Cooperation, including in humanitarian demining. Therefore, we greatly value initiatives such as the Country Coalition as well as the Individualized Approach and we look with interest at the meetings focusing on case studies for the individualised approach, like those on Somalia and Tajikistan, organised at the margins of this Meeting of States Parties.

Italy stands ready to contribute to all these efforts, enhancing the effectiveness of international assistance through greater coordination among all relevant stakeholders at local and international level.

Thank you, Mister President.