



Permanent Mission of Italy
UN - Geneva

Ninth Pledging Conference for the Implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention

Geneva, 1 March 2024

Mister President,

At the outset, I would like to warmly congratulate you on assuming the Presidency of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and to commend you for organizing this Pledging Conference and for all the activities that you have already set up, together with the Coordinating Committees and the ISU.

Italy aligns itself with the statement of the European Union. Let me add some remarks in my national capacity.

Mister President,

The Ottawa Convention is a landmark step in the history of disarmament representing the first time that a weapon already in widespread use has been proscribed by international humanitarian law on the basis of humanitarian, social and environmental effects. Today marks the 25th anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention, an instrument that enabled great achievements but still facing important challenges: universalization, responding to new conflicts and increased use of improvised explosive devices, assisting victims and ensuring their access to rehabilitation, education and employment referral services.

We deem the upcoming Review Conference in Siem Reap to be of crucial importance to develop new, innovative and creative thinking on how to bring forward the objectives of the Convention. We are not just referring to disarmament goals, but also humanitarian imperatives and we bear, in this Conference Room, a special responsibility. It is unacceptable that so many areas in the world are still contaminated, that man, women and children continue to be injured or die as a consequence of the use of these terrible weapons.

Ambitious goals require personal commitment, but that is as much important as appropriate financial resources. Prioritization and financial coordination are key activities we carry out in our current role as President of the Mine Action Support Group (MASG), which represents an important platform for coordinating humanitarian mine action programs, aligning respective project priorities and increasing support where most needed.

In Italy, a dedicated Trust Fund for Humanitarian Demining was set up by law in 2001, providing for the allocation of resources to mine action projects relating to anti-personnel landmines and explosive remnants of war. Since then, we devoted approximately 80 million Euros to Mine Action programs.

Through the Fund, we have also contributed to support the ISU of the Convention since its establishment. We believe that the Unit has consistently provided effective assistance to all States Parties in implementing the Convention's provisions, providing technical advice, building capacity, and promoting universalization. Let me take this opportunity to commend its Director, Mr. Juan Carlos Ruan, and all the staff working at the ISU for their efforts.

Although our national timeline for the planning and budgeting of Mine Action activities in 2024 does not allow us to pledge a specific amount during this Conference, we intend to reaffirm our support to the ISU activities in line with previous years.

Thank you, Mister President.