

Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC)
18th Meeting of State Parties (Virtual Meeting)
16-20 November 2020

Statement by India

Mr. President,

The delegation of India welcomes you as the Chair of the 18th Meeting of State Parties of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. We appreciate the role played by Sudan in this important area of our work. The Chair and the APMBC ISU team deserve special mention for all their special efforts to hold this meeting this year in spite of the exceptional circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic.

India supports the vision of a world free of anti-personnel land mines. India's participation in this Meeting of State Parties as an Observer and at other MSPs and Review Conferences since 2004 is a testimony to our commitment to this noble objective.

India is committed towards reducing the dependence on anti-personnel mines. We believe that the availability of militarily effective alternative technologies that can perform the defensive function of anti-personnel landmines in a cost-effective manner, will facilitate the goal of their complete elimination.

India is a party to the Amended Protocol-II of the CCW which strikes a balance between humanitarian concerns and the legitimate defense requirements of States especially with long borders. India has fulfilled its obligations under Amended Protocol-II on non-production of non-detectable mines as well as rendering all our anti-personnel mines detectable. Furthermore, India observes a moratorium on the export and transfer of landmines.

Mr. President,

India is a leading contributor to UN peacekeeping operations and has extended assistance to international de-mining and rehabilitation efforts. During the course of the last one year, India has undertaken specialist training on Counter IED, bomb disposal and de-mining with numerous partner countries including Australia, Cambodia, Indonesia and Uzbekistan. Our 12-member team of experts participated in a joint counter explosive threat task forces training exercise Ardent Defender-2019 at Ontario, Canada. About 130 personnel from 13 African States participated in exercise AFINDEX, a multinational exercise on demining and unexploded ordinance held in India in March 2020.

Mr. President,

On the occasion of the 150th Birth Anniversary celebrations of Mahatma Gandhi, in October 2018, India had launched the 'India for Humanity' initiative and conducted 13 artificial limb fitment camps and fitted more than 6500 artificial limbs in the last two years in Malawi, Iraq, Nepal, Egypt, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Syria, Vietnam, Tanzania, Senegal and Namibia. In view of its success and recognition by partner countries, this initiative has now been extended up to March 2023. The prosthetic limb, popularly known as Jaipur Foot, has gained worldwide recognition for its efficacy, safety and cost-effectiveness.

An important component of our efforts to avoid civilian casualties is through enhanced public awareness on landmines. Further, mine victims are assisted in rehabilitation with financial compensation, employment and health assistance. India's ratification of the Convention on the Right of Persons with Disabilities underscores the importance we attach to victim assistance. India would also like to reiterate the importance of development and sharing of technology to protect civilians against the indiscriminate use of mines as well as for mine clearance. India has been cooperating and providing assistance to various countries and stands ready to contribute towards capacity building, victim assistance and victim rehabilitation, upon request from friendly countries under the UN mandate.

Thank you, Mr. President.

