



EU Statement

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

Geneva, 23 February 2021

Mr. President,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, the Republic of North Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Serbia* and Albania*, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the EFTA country Iceland, member of the European Economic Area, as well as the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this statement.

At the outset, we would like to congratulate you on assuming the Presidency of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and we look forward to working with you.

The European Union welcomes this Pledging Conference and hopes to see a successful mobilization towards the effective implementation of this Convention and, more generally, towards the sustainable financing of humanitarian mine action. Unfortunately, landmines and explosive remnants of war remain a destructive threat in many parts of the world. We must therefore continue to support mine-affected States in their efforts to clear mines and destroy stockpiles; to support mine-risk education; and to provide support for victims and their families and communities that is sensitive to gender, age, and disability.

The success of this Convention can be largely attributed to the sustained commitment and partnerships of mine-affected States and those who helped them along the way. This energetic

* The Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

mine action community has grown over the years and includes thousands of national and international organizations throughout the world, encompassing the UN, the International Committee of the Red Cross, civil society, business, and States. We have the strength and the determination to leave no mine-affected State behind.

On our part, the EU will remain committed to be part of this community and to support the implementation of this Convention towards our goal of a world free of anti-personnel mines. The long-standing history of commitment of the EU and EU Member States to humanitarian demining is reflected in many ongoing development partnerships and in contribution of over €800 million to humanitarian mine action in the past 5 years.

Mr. President,

The 6th Pledging Conference provides an opportunity to renew and strengthen our collective commitment to the comprehensive prohibition of anti-personnel mines, towards the goal of a mine-free world by 2025, and to enhance cooperation and assistance for mine action. The Meeting of State Parties held in November last year testified the impressive progress made by mine-affected countries to fulfill their demining obligations, to identify remaining and emerging challenges, and to assist victims. This momentum must be maintained. The determination of these countries to achieve the goals of the Convention should be met with an unrelenting commitment to international cooperation and assistance on the donors' part.

For many years, the EU have directly supported the Implementation Support Unit by means of EU Council Decisions, with the latest one (2017/1428/CFSP) worth 2.3 million Euros, which is coming to its end these days. In this regard, we wish to thank the Director of the ISU and his excellent team for the exemplary implementation of the EU project.

We are pleased to announce that this support will continue in the coming years, with a seamless transition to a new successor framework. Just adopted on 18 February 2021, the EU Council Decision will provide over 2.6 million EUR for an extended period of 4 years with the objective to contribute to the full implementation of the Oslo Action Plan and its concrete actions. The EU Council Decision will carry out a variety of universalization efforts. These would include high-level visits, technical meetings and/or workshops, sponsorship of relevant officials from target States to attend Convention meetings, and ambassadorial-level meetings at the United

Nations headquarters or any of its subsidiary regional headquarters. In the same vein, it will extend its support to States via national and/or regional stakeholders dialogues.

Mr. President,

We want to take this opportunity to yet again encourage all States Parties to contribute to mine action, including to the work of the Implementation Support Unit, which is critical to the functioning of the Convention.

Thank you.