

**Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
Seventh Pledging Conference
1.3.2022**

Statement of Austria

Madame President,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Ambassador Alicia ARANGO OLMOS, on your assumption of the Presidency of the Twentieth Meeting of States Parties of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, and for chairing our importing meeting today.

Austria fully subscribes to the statement by the European Union. Please allow me to make the following remarks in a national capacity.

We wish to seize this opportunity to reaffirm our country's full commitment to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. Since its early days, Austria has been a staunch supporter and we will continue to support its full implementation, as the Convention's impressive accomplishments make a difference on the ground every day. The last Meeting of State Parties again outlined the important progress and created a momentum we should try to keep to reach our ultimate goal of a world without anti-personnel mines.

Keeping in mind the victims of these horrendous weapons, we can be proud that today, 164 States have formally agreed to be bound by the Convention and have legally committed to end the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel mines. 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. By now the mine community includes a plethora of national and international organizations, encompassing the UN, the International Committee of the Red Cross, civil society and business.

Madame President,

Austria contributed €3.2 million to our humanitarian demining partner ITF Enhancing Human Security for their ongoing projects in Northeast Syria. The widespread use of various types of weaponry has left behind a range of explosive hazards including landmines, improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and explosive remnants of war (ERW). The aim of the project is to increase civilian population's security and sustainable returns by protecting lives and civilian infrastructure and productive assets, and supporting livelihoods and income-generation.

Austria highly values the important work of the ISU and we thank Juan Carlos Ruan and his team for their dedicated work. A well-functioning secretariat is an important component of advancing implementation. Thus, Austria will again contribute EUR 10.000 to the 2022 ISU budget.

Madame President,

Upholding the norm against anti-personnel land mines is vital. Austria firmly condemns any use of anti-personnel mines anywhere and by any actor. We also want to take this opportunity to yet again encourage all States Parties to contribute to mine action in full and on time.

I thank you