

Maputo Review Conference on a Mine-Free World

Statement by Ireland

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Mr. President, as this is the first time Ireland takes the floor during this Review Conference, allow me to express our appreciation for the warm hospitality that has been extended to us and to congratulate you on an excellent start to our Conference.

Ireland would like to record our appreciation for the leadership and dedication of Mozambique and Japan as co-chairs of the Standing Committee on Mine Clearance.

- The Landmine Monitor recently recorded the lowest number of new casualties ever, the largest amount of contaminated land released ever, and the highest level of global funding for mine action. Ireland welcomes the recent progress made on mine clearance with 30 States Parties having completed implementation of their Article 5 obligations. (List of recent States in Landmine Monitor)

- As our draft outcome documents recognise, in the 15 years since we last met here in Maputo, very significant progress has been achieved in clearance. However, despite progress emplaced mines continue to threaten lives and instil fear in communities, all the while, hindering development and opportunity.
- Ireland believes that completing Article 5 (mine clearance) obligations of the Convention remain a central tenet for achieving our shared goal of a world free of anti-personnel land mines. However, we recognise that requests for extensions on Article 5 obligations are testimony to the continued challenges faced by some States Parties in meeting their obligations. As the draft Maputo Action Plan points out, the methods and means of identifying, clearing or releasing areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines have significantly improved since 1999.
- Ireland remains concerned that in a small number of cases there has been a lack of specific details and timelines in requests, based on outdated baselines and inaccurate and incomplete reporting. (IBCL stated concern)
- Ireland warmly welcomes the focus in the Maputo Action Plan on identifying the specific remaining implementation challenges faced by States in their Article 7 transparency report annually and ensuring that 'high quality requests' for extended mine clearance deadlines continue to be submitted. Deadlines for reporting and mine clearance are legal obligations under the Convention.
- Convinced that mine clearance is an essential component of the Convention and a major step towards a 'world free of anti-personnel landmines', Ireland wishes to recognise and pay tribute to all those who operate in mine clearance activity, the recent deaths of mine clearance workers in Afghanistan reminds us that these workers often face multiple threats working with these despicable weapons, in dangerous and sometimes hostile and insecure environments.