



Council of the  
European Union

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## OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

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From: General Secretariat of the Council

To: Delegations

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Subject: Council Conclusions on an EU position on strengthening the ban against anti-personnel mines in view of the Fifth Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention.

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Delegations will find in annex the Council Conclusions on an EU position on strengthening the ban against anti-personnel mines in view of the Fifth Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, as approved by the Council at its 4028<sup>th</sup> meeting on 27 May 2024.

**Council Conclusions on an EU position on strengthening the ban against anti-personnel mines  
in view of the Fifth Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention**

***I- Introduction***

1. The European Union (EU) stands united in supporting and pursuing the objectives of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction.<sup>1</sup> The EU and its Member States have a long history of support for mine clearance and the destruction of stockpiled anti-personnel mines, as well as for assistance to victims of anti-personnel mines, promotion of the universalisation of the Convention and support to States Parties in their full and effective implementation of the Convention. All EU Member States are party to the Convention since 1 June 2013;
2. The Council considers the Convention to be a key disarmament instrument, the integrity, full implementation and strict application of which must be guaranteed, and universal adherence thereto must be pursued. Twenty-five years after its entry into force, the Convention has become a success story of disarmament diplomacy and an example of what the Union stands for: an international rules-based order, rooted in the respect for human rights and International Humanitarian Law. The Convention combines a strong global norm on the prohibition of the use, transfer and production of antipersonnel mines with impressive results regarding the destruction of stockpiled anti-personnel mines, the clearance of mine contaminated land, and its provision that each State Party, in a position to do so, shall provide relevant assistance to mine victims that should be integrated into broader national policies, plans and legal frameworks.

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<sup>1</sup> Thereinafter the “Convention”.

The Convention has generated a measurable and considerable positive impact on humanitarian protection, stabilisation, development and disarmament worldwide, contributing to global peace and security and to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

3. The Council acknowledges that the objectives of the Convention have not yet been achieved in full. Anti-personnel mine contamination continues to cause harm, instil fear, deny access, impede socio-economic development and stop refugees and internally displaced people from returning home. The burden placed by anti-personnel mines and explosive remnants of war on individuals, families, communities, regions and States remains high and unacceptable. The Council strongly condemns Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine, as well as the use of anti-personnel mines and improvised anti-personnel mines, that makes Ukraine the most mine-contaminated country in the world. The Council is also concerned about new contaminations in countries such as Iraq, Libya, Syria, Yemen, Myanmar as well as in the Sahel. The Council reaffirms that any use of anti-personnel mines anywhere, anytime, and by any actor remains completely unacceptable to the EU;
4. The Council recalls that the EU and its Member States are major donors for mine action assistance worldwide, supporting universalisation, survey and clearance of mined areas, mine risk education, victim assistance, stockpile destruction, capacity building and research and development in technology for mine detection and clearance. Since the last Review Conference of the Convention in 2019 the EU and its Member States have remained major donors to mine action in the world, with 26 million euros allocated in 2022 and 38.5 million euros allocated in 2023 under the crisis response instruments, and another 8.5 million euros in 2022 and 16 million euros in 2023 under humanitarian aid. The Council also recalls the substantial complementary support by individual EU Member States in funding mine action assistance activities and projects;
5. The Council recalls the contribution provided to the Implementation Support Unit of the Convention under Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/257, of 18 February 2021, in support of the Oslo Action Plan for the implementation of the 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction.

This Decision has enabled the Implementation Support Unit to engage in the implementation of the Oslo Action Plan adopted at the occasion of the Fourth Review Conference of the Convention in 2019, including by promoting universalisation and supporting the efforts of States Parties to implement the survey, clearance, mine risk education and victim assistance aspects of the Oslo Action Plan;

6. The Council expresses its appreciation towards many partners and stakeholders that have contributed to the development of the Convention and its successes of the past twenty-five years, including all States Parties, International Organisations, Civil Society, researchers, and all mine action donors and operators. In this light, the Council recognises, among others, the efforts undertaken by the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and the International Campaign to Ban Landmines. The Council would in particular like to honour the courage and determination of deminers worldwide who are working to make land accessible and safe again, and would like to commemorate those who lost their lives while doing this noble work. The Council stresses the importance of including survivors and their representative organisations, including youth organisations and women's rights and women led organisations, in the implementation and universalisation of the Convention. The Council congratulates the Implementation Support Unit of the Convention for its steadfast and invaluable work. Finally, the Council underscores the strong partnership and excellent cooperation between the United Nations and the EU in the field of mine action;
7. The Council welcomes the upcoming Fifth Review Conference of the Convention, to take place in Siem Reap-Angkor from 25 to 29 November 2024, as an opportunity to review progress, reaffirm commitments and promote further universalisation and strengthened implementation of the Convention. The Council considers that the Review Conference should encourage an open and constructive dialogue between States Parties and involve all relevant stakeholders to discuss current and future challenges and accelerate progress towards achieving the shared goal of an anti-personnel mine-free world;
8. An elaboration of the EU's objectives for the outcome of the Review Conference can be found in the position paper under item II.

***II- EU position paper in view of the fifth review conference on the prohibition of the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel mines and on their destructions (Siem Reap-Angkor, 25-29 November 2024)***

The European Union (EU) will contribute constructively to a successful consensus outcome of the Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, thereby pursuing the inclusion of the following elements in the three foreseen outcome documents: (1) the Review of the Operation and Status of the Convention, (2) the Political Declaration and (3) the Action Plan.

*1) With regard to the Review of the Operation and Status of the Convention:*

1. Identify new implementation challenges that were met by States Parties in all areas of the Convention (universalisation, compliance, victim assistance, mine clearance, stockpile destruction, cooperation and assistance, transparency, and exchange of information);
2. Recall the conclusions of the German Presidency of the 21<sup>st</sup> Meeting of States Parties to the Convention regarding the current challenges as outlined in the papers circulated to the Conference;
3. Strive for a detailed review of the implementation status of the Convention's obligations since the Fourth Review Conference in 2019, building on the preparatory work and conclusions of the Convention's Committees, including :

*Universalisation*

- a. Support all efforts engaged towards universalisation, including those of the Presidency, Implementation Support Unit and Special Envoys of the Convention, and develop incentives to promote universalisation, including through funding;

*Implementation of article 5*

- b. Encourage States Parties to submit in time detailed information regarding the implementation of their article 5 obligations, in particular regarding extension requests;

- c. Recall that 14 States Parties have to meet their mine clearance obligations by 2025, and regret that only a few remain likely to meet this deadline;
- d. Encourage efforts from all concerned States Parties, given the multiple extension requests expected in 2024; Call on States Parties to submit detailed work plans for the extension periods requested, including cost analysis and context-specific initiatives for mine risk education and reduction in affected communities;
- e. Encourage States Parties to keep national mine action standards up to date in accordance with the latest International Mine Action Standards (IMAS);
- f. Encourage States Parties that are reported to be contaminated by anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature to continue building awareness of the need to address this contamination within the framework of the Convention;
- g. Encourage reinforcing the synergies between the Committee on Article 5 Implementation and the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance, as well as enhancing the dialogue with expert organizations;
- h. Support the establishment of an informal support group for the Article 5 Committee, and continue exploring how to strengthen the Article 5 process including input from relevant stakeholders;

*Implementation of article 7*

- i. Call on States Parties to comply with their reporting obligations under Article 7;

*Regarding cooperation and assistance*

- j. Promote the outcome of the third Global Conference on victim assistance and ensure that this feeds into the future Action Plan;
- k. Support the individualised approach format that the Committee implements in order to give a platform for interested affected States Parties to present their specific challenges and needs to relevant stakeholders, including donors and mine action operators;

4. Review the Convention's implementation machinery and support efforts and proposals to improve it where necessary, in line with the Convention;
5. Call for efforts to sustain and deliver new funding for mine action, including through innovative financing;
6. Call on States Parties in arrears for assessed contributions to the Convention to resolve this, underlining that a political commitment to the Convention should be supported by a financial commitment, and encourage States Parties in a position to do so to provide voluntary contributions to the Implementation Support Unit of the Convention;

2) *With regard to the Siem Reap-Angkor Political declaration*

1. Commit to a rules-based international order, rooted in the respect for International Law, including Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law, and support for a continued multilateral dialogue on disarmament;
2. Express appreciation to Cambodia for hosting the Fifth Review Conference, acknowledge Cambodia's strong experience in all areas of Mine Action, and its readiness to make other countries benefit from its experience;
3. Express support to the priority given by the Cambodian Presidency to universalisation, implementation of article 5 and assistance to victims, and recall the EU's support and readiness to engage in these areas;
4. Reaffirm the strong commitment to upholding the norm against anti-personal mines and supporting the universalisation of the Convention;
5. Recall that any use of anti-personnel mines anywhere, anytime, and by any actor remains completely unacceptable to the EU;
6. Express the political commitment of States Parties to implement the Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan;
7. Regret the lack of progress in the universalisation of the Convention since 2017, with 33 States remaining outside, and encourage renewed engagement in favour of universalisation from all States Parties and other actors;

8. Recall the importance of partnerships with all mine action actors, including with civil society, national mine action authorities and private sector;
9. Confirm that improvised explosive devices (IEDs) that meet the Convention's definition of an anti-personnel mine, fall under the obligations of the Convention;
10. Underline that mine action is often essential to enable socio-economic development, peace building, stabilisation and humanitarian access;
11. Commit to considering diversity and gender equality and promote gender responsive and conflict sensitive approaches in delivering all aspects of mine action, as well as in the institutional proceedings of the Convention;
12. Express concern regarding the many casualties from anti-personnel mines in the period since the Fourth Review Conference, list the most affected countries, compare data and trends with previous years and draw lessons for the five years to come;
13. Explore the benefits and strengthen existing synergies with other instruments under International Humanitarian Law, such as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD); these instruments are key components of victim assistance, to promote human rights and the effective participation of persons with disabilities in society on an equal basis;

3) *With regard to the Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan*

1. Address all aspects of the implementation of the Convention, best practices for implementing the Convention, universalisation, stockpile destruction and retention of anti-personnel mines, survey and clearance of mined areas, mine risk education, victim assistance, international cooperation and assistance, and measures to ensure compliance;
2. Build on the gaps and challenges identified through the Review of the Operation and Status of the Convention to collectively develop proposals for innovation, improve and strengthen implementation of the Convention in all its aspects;

Underline that mine action is an enabler and supports security and humanitarian efforts, stabilisation, and socio-economic development, as well as the return of refugees and integrated support to mine victims;



3. Recognise the contribution of the New Agenda for Peace and of the Pact for the Future to Mine Action; Recognise the special partnerships of the Convention with the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, as well as the contribution of partnerships with the civil society in supporting the implementation of the Convention;
4. Recall the contribution of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Women, Peace and Security Agenda and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals;
5. Promote a commitment by all States Parties to fully implement and complete their obligations under the Convention, including by taking appropriate assistance measures, when they are in a position to do so, beyond mine clearance, to ensure social and economic rehabilitation of mine victims;
6. Promote support to National or Regional Stakeholder Dialogues to further improve cooperation and assistance on the implementation of the Convention and to encourage parties responsible for the wellbeing of mine- affected communities and survivors to better address the challenges they face through strengthened dialogue and partnerships;
7. Encourage to develop policies to best assist mine victims in a non-discriminatory manner addressing the specific needs of all civilians, including mental health and psychosocial support;
8. Encourage mainstreaming a gender perspective and taking the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities into account in mine action programming;
9. Take into account environmental and climate implications of all aspects of mine action, encourage States Parties to prioritise these aspects in national mine action strategies, report on these aspects, nominate focal points in the dedicated committees and consider mine contamination and mine action in national disaster response plans; encourage operators to take into account these aspects in their actions and projects;

10. Take into account International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and policy recommendations of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) in this regard;
11. Ensure the respect of key principles in mine action, including transparency, accountability, effectiveness and efficiency, inclusiveness and conflict sensitivity;  
  
Promote and look for ways to capitalise on best practices gathered from experience and exchanges at all levels;
12. Support innovative approaches, such as new funding and financing mechanisms for mine action assistance;
13. Encourage the adoption of measures to strengthen the Article 5 process with a view to better meet the challenges of concerned states and effectively support them to fulfil their obligations in time;
14. Support the increase in financial and technical support for mine clearance and for mine victim assistance;
15. Confirm that anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature have to be reported and cleared through mine action in accordance with existing obligations;
16. Recall the issue of the unlawful use of improvised explosive devices that meet the Convention's definition of an anti-personnel mine as a critical concern that should warrant consideration in the next action plan, in particular in the area of mine risk education.

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