



**17th Meeting of States Parties to the
Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention**

**Statement by Katy Donnelly
Deputy Permanent Representative to the
Conference on Disarmament, Geneva**

Article 5 (clearance)

27 November 2018

Thank you Madam President.

As this is the first time my delegation takes the floor please allow me to congratulate you on Afghanistan's presidency of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. This is an important year – the last before the Review Conference at which we will be assessing our collective progress towards the achievement of the Maputo Action Plan. You bring with you a depth of experience – including in the issues at the heart of our Convention – and we welcome the opportunity to support your efforts here.

My delegation wishes to make a few brief comments on the issue of mine clearance, which remains central to the achievement of the overall objectives of this Convention. We welcome that Mauritania has reported completing clearance in December 2017 and congratulate it on this success. We also congratulate Afghanistan, Croatia, Iraq and Cambodia for again achieving the largest total clearance of mined areas in 2017.

We thank all countries with Article V obligations that have submitted updates to this meeting, and which have engaged with the Article V committee – and of course we express our appreciation to the Committee for its efforts and reporting.

We note the Committee's recommendations with respect to the extension requests that have been submitted for approval by Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Serbia, Sudan, Ukraine and the UK. We welcome that Ukraine is returning to compliance with its Article 5 obligations and

encourage Ukraine to remain engaged with the office holders of the Convention and ensure accurate reporting on the challenges faced and progress made. Although we recognise the difficulties faced by Ukraine, we note our concern that it did not follow the process relating to extension request which was established at the 7th Meeting of States Parties, in particular with respect to the late submission of Ukraine's extension request which has not facilitated its cooperative dialogue with the Article V Committee.

Madam President, to end on a positive note, New Zealand is delighted to see in the latest Landmine Monitor that donors and affected States contributed the highest combined total of international and national mine action funding ever reported in Monitor data, with much of the increase the result of significant increases from Germany and the US. We congratulate these donors and are pleased that, despite the growing number of urgent priorities on the humanitarian agenda, mine clearance is seeing a boost in attention and support. At the same time we recognise the need to maintain and further increase these efforts, and to ensure that funds are distributed wherever they are needed.

For our part, New Zealand is pleased to have supported mine and UXO activities around the world, including in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Solomon Islands, and the West Bank, and through a range of programmes run by the ICRC and UN agencies involved in mine action work. We have also recently provided untagged flexible core funding to the UN Mine Action Service to support the Organisation's work, including in removing and destroying mines.

We remain deeply appreciative of the tireless efforts of civil society and our humanitarian partners on the ground, and New Zealand will continue to look for ways it can support mine clearance activities with a view to realising our objective of an end to suffering from landmines by 2025.

Thank you Madam President.