



**16th 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)

20 December 2017

Thank you Mr President.

As this is the first time my delegation takes the floor please allow me to congratulate you on Austria's presidency of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention for this, its 20th anniversary year. It is an appointment that reflects Austria's tireless efforts as a champion of humanitarian disarmament and is a boost to our collective efforts to achieve a landmine-free 2025.

My delegation wishes to make a few brief comments on the issue of mine clearance, a core obligation under the Ottawa Convention that has seen much progress but that continues to face significant challenges in its implementation. With that in mind we are particularly pleased to join others in congratulating Algeria for having reported the completion of its Article 5 obligations. At the same time, however, while recognising the challenges faced by Ukraine, we take this opportunity to urge Ukraine to submit an extension request and end its non-compliance with the Convention. We urge, too, all States Parties with Article 5 obligations to submit the required work plans and transparency reports.

Mr President, it is clear from progress reports and from updates we receive from our mine clearance operators and other partners, that achieving clearance deadlines is not getting any easier. Indeed, with so many other urgent priorities on the humanitarian agenda, it seems increasingly difficult to secure the necessary attention and funding.

For our part, New Zealand is pleased to have provided NZ\$9.1 million over the past year in support of mine action programmes around the world, including in Lao PDR, Colombia and the West Bank, and through a range of programmes run by the ICRC and UN agencies involved in mine action work. We are also pleased to have provided a voluntary contribution of NZ\$40,000 to the Ottawa Convention's Implementation Support Unit in 2017.

At a practical level, New Zealand is also pleased to support the work of Burnsafe, a New Zealand company that has developed thermit technology, a non-explosive means of destroying landmines and cluster munitions. With support from the New Zealand Aid Programme, Burnsafe is currently active in Colombia, Laos PDR and Iraq. We are particularly pleased that Burnsafe has established good working relationships with implementing partners on the ground, including, for example, HALO Trust in Colombia, and that it provides full training for its product in a way that enables locals to take the lead.

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 Mr President.

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