



**2021 Intersessional Meetings of the
Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention**

**Mobilizing Resources towards a Mine Free World
Statement by New Zealand**

24 June 2021

Thank you Ambassador Gabriëlse.

As this is the first time I take the floor, please allow me to congratulate you on your election as President of the Nineteenth Meeting of States Parties for this Convention. New Zealand acknowledges the hard work of your team, as well as the Implementation Support Unit, coordination committee, and all of the others involved in enabling our intersessional meetings to proceed virtually this week, while you also continue to make arrangements for the Meeting of States Parties later this year.

At the outset, I also want to acknowledge all of the states who have updated this meeting on their progress towards meeting their mine clearance and stockpile destruction obligations under our Treaty, and commend all of those who have reiterated their commitment to becoming mine free by 2025. But, like others, New Zealand is deeply concerned by recent reports about the relatively small number of states that appear to be on track to meet their clearance deadlines. This clearly underlines that more, and more effective, support is needed to mobilize resources towards achieving a mine free world.

For our part, New Zealand is pleased to have provided tens of millions of dollars to support mine clearance in a number of the most heavily mined areas of the world in recent years, including Lao PDR, Colombia, Iraq and Afghanistan. We are also pleased to contribute un-earmarked funding to programmes run by the UN Mine Action Service and the ICRC, and to have supported an Explosive Ordnance Risk Education “training the trainers” programme last year in the West Bank, run by UNMAS. Our national outreach

programme on conventional weapons treaties, including the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention has also continued in our own region, the Pacific – albeit in a virtual format this year.

It is vital that all States Parties play our part in continuing – and, where possible, accelerating – our work in clearing contaminated areas, implementing risk education programmes, destroying stockpiled mines and assisting survivors. The Covid-19 pandemic of the past 18 months has only underlined the need for the international community to work together to address global issues, including the ongoing risks posed by anti-personnel mines.

To this end, New Zealand regrets the low submission rate of annual reports under this Convention. Regular and reliable reporting is critical for our Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention community to have a clear picture of where we are, and what we need to do in order to achieve a mine free world as soon as possible.

Finally, we wish to record our deep appreciation for the tireless efforts of our partners from non-governmental organisations and civil society for the critical role they play in implementing this Treaty. We were shocked by the killing of 11 HALO Trust staff, and the injuring of 15 more, earlier this month in Afghanistan by an unknown armed group. This was a reprehensible and cowardly attack on humanitarian workers who were carrying out essential de-mining work to reduce the ongoing risks of anti-personnel mines to make this community safer and more secure. We offer our deepest sympathies to all of those affected, as well as their loved ones and their colleagues.

Thank you.