

**Statement by Dr. Barbara Haering
President of the Council of Foundation of the GICHD**

**4RC APMBC – “Renewing the political commitment to the Convention”
Oslo, 26 November 2019**

Mr. President, Your Royal Highness, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have come a long way from adopting the APMBC here in Oslo on September 18, 1997 to the forth review conference of the convention to be held again here in Oslo. Let me briefly walk us through our history.

- The first review conference held in Nairobi in 2004 focused on finding common grounds regarding mine action standards and operational approaches.
- The second review conference in Cartagena in 2009 paid particular attention to the universalization of the convention and to sharing best practice in mine action.
- At the third review conference in Maputo five years ago, we saw light at the end of the tunnel and we renewed our commitment to get the job done by 2025 at latest.
- And here we are, starting the fourth review conference with a lot of experience gained, with success stories to be congratulated – but also facing new challenges in the fields as well as regarding international humanitarian action and cooperation in times of terrorism.

Our ambition is to turn the Oslo Action Plan 2020-2024 into reality on the ground and for the people. In this regard, a risk based approach to mine action, national ownership as well as international solidarity will be of paramount importance. Let me highlight the lessons we have learned in making mine action a success.

1. First, **national ownership** is key. Developing comprehensive national strategies is instrumental to ensure that all actors involved pull in the same direction and to mobilize the resources needed. Thus, the GICHD places the cooperation with national authorities at the center of its activities.
2. Second, **land release** is pivotal. While the approach and methodology are well known and captured in the IMAS, they are not yet implemented fully. To this end, national authorities must be able to trust the quality of surveys. Thus, an effective land release process must rely on a solid information management system, on accurate data and on a shared terminology.

3. Third, the **risk education pillar** of mine action needs to be re-invented. The growing number of casualties from explosive ordnance in the last five years is alarming. It reflects the changing nature of war with increasing risks in urban areas. The establishment of an “Explosive Ordnance Risk Education Advisory Group” – with the GICHD serving as its secretariat – is an important step to address this challenge.
4. Fourth, we have to **empower women and girls** in all mine action activities. This implies a higher level of ambition and accountability than shown in the past. Thus, the GICHD has elevated gender equality and inclusion as a strategic objective in its new strategy.
5. Fifth and finally, we must conceptualize and implement mine action as an endeavor **enabling broader agendas** – be they humanitarian, focusing on development or related to peace and security. Together with UNDP, the GICHD has shown to what extent mine action contributes to the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. Let us further develop this approach.

Mister President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The commitment taken by States Parties five years ago in Maputo as well as new and ongoing conflicts with dramatic impacts on the civilian population urges us to reinforce our efforts in the years to come. States Parties will have the opportunity to adopt a strong and comprehensive action plan for the next five years, developed in an open and inclusive manner and I would like to extend our sincere gratitude to the Norwegian Presidency for its engagement throughout the year.

Let us work together towards a mine free world, leaving no one behind, by turning the Oslo Action Plan into concrete and measurable actions and results. Rest assured that the GICHD will continue its support to the implementation of the Convention.

Thank you.