



## Mine Action UNSC Arria-formula Meeting

12 December 2024

### Trusteeship Council Chamber, UN Headquarters - Statement by Australia

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Australia thanks Japan for convening the UN Security Council Arria-formula meeting on “Safeguarding Lives, Sustaining Peace: Enhancing Mine Action for Stabilization, Protection, Recovery, and Inclusion”. Australia welcomes the opportunity to provide a written statement.

A world free of Anti-Personnel Mines remains a priority for Australia. We support universalisation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) and its full implementation by States Parties.

Anti-Personnel Mines can pose a disproportionate threat to civilian populations and host nations prospects of rebuilding in a post-conflict environment.

These mines do not distinguish between civilians and combatants. The victims are diverse and include families, children, merchants, humanitarian workers, and UN peacekeepers.

According to the Landmine Monitor, there are at least 58 States contaminated with anti-personnel mines. There is still much to do to achieve a landmine free world.

Australia recognises that international assistance and cooperation is critical in achieving this shared goal. For Australia’s delivery of assistance, our region, and the significant challenges it faces, remains a priority.

Australia’s longstanding program to remove unexploded ordnance, Operation RENDERSAFE, continues to support our Pacific Island family.

Through the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), Australia has also invested in a major multi-year uplift in our international assistance, with a focus on our region aimed at achieving a mine impact-free Pacific.



Australian funding to the GICHD enables the organisation to carry out the critical work of the APMBC Implementation Support Unit. This includes the provision of technical support to all State Parties on the implementation of the APMBC.

Mines of an improvised nature – or IEDs – threaten peace and security and remain a weapon-of-choice for non-state actors. They have a disproportionate impact on civilians who have been reported to account for more than 80 percent of all IED-related casualties. Australia together with France and Nigeria continues to press for global action through our recently adopted UN General Assembly resolution on ‘Countering the threat posed by Improvised Explosive Devices’. This resolution strongly encourages States to develop and implement national measures to counter IEDs, while also encouraging greater international cooperation and assistance. We thank States for their continued support for the resolution.

Australia supports consideration of how new and emerging technologies can be best applied to mine action. Assistive technology, including mobility devices, is essential in the delivery of victim assistance. Technology can also make the job of our courageous mine clearance operators safer. These technologies present opportunities for mitigating the risks in areas such as detecting, mapping and removal of unexploded ordnance, including landmines. Australia, through our principal science and research institutions, is keenly engaged in researching innovative solutions to the unexploded ordnance risk reduction challenges, including remote detection, ground penetrating radar, and detection algorithms.

Australia thanks Cambodia for its excellent hosting of the Fifth Review Conference of the APMBC in Siem Reap and for its stewardship in achieving the consensus adoption of the Siem Reap-Angkor Declaration and its accompanying Action Plan. The Declaration acknowledges the progress since the Convention’s inception with near-universal adherence, while also recognising the challenges and the terrible casualties that regrettably persist. The Action Plan contains realistic efforts to address the challenges that all States Parties can commit to undertaking over the next five years.

Australia was pleased to join the Joint Statement on Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming delivered by Japan at the APBMC Review Conference. We share the



commitment to advancing gender equality and addressing the diverse needs of those affected by anti-personnel mines and to advancing the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

Australia congratulates Japan on the assumption of the APMBC Presidency and looks forward to further advancement of mine action efforts globally.