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United Nations Mine Action Service
Intersessional Meetings of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
(15-18 June 2026)

**Statement under agenda item 7. Consultations on the Feasibility of the Establishment of a
Voluntary Trust Fund**

Delivered by Maria Vardis, UNMAS

Geneva, 17 June 2026

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

This statement is delivered on behalf of the United Nations Mine Action Service.

We are grateful for the leadership of Norway and efforts of all members of the Working Group to explore the feasibility of establishing a Voluntary Trust Fund to support affected States Parties struggling to secure international assistance to meet their Article 5 obligations. Full implementation of Article 5 obligations is a shared objective for States Parties and the United Nations (Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action).

UNMAS commends the Working Group for its report, noting that its conclusions closely align with the situation on the ground in many places where UNMAS operates. We note that the report highlights funding as a crucial factor for States Parties to be able to fulfil their treaty obligations, but that it also recognizes that clearance capacity alone is not enough. Delays in other vital elements, such as missing baseline surveys, limited survey capacity, outdated national standards, and fragmented short-term funding, can have a negative impact on completion. Meeting the obligations of the Convention is truly a multi-faceted affair that encompasses technical capability, information management, political engagement, funding and international cooperation.

We acknowledge the struggle noted in the report over prioritizing scarce funding resources while humanitarian needs are mounting and donor funding remaining highly concentrated and largely earmarked. Advocating for specific and dedicated funding could be a viable way to



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prioritize meeting obligations under the Convention. Furthermore, providing more unearmarked funding would also allow the necessary flexibility to allocate resources to priorities identified under the Convention's framework.

Should States Parties decide to establish a Voluntary Trust Fund, as noted by the Working Group, there are a range of viable options for how the fund could be created and administered. UNMAS has experience managing a Mine Action-focused Trust Fund – the United Nations Voluntary Trust on Assistance in Mine Action (UN VTF). We stand ready to provide information, best practices, and lessons learnt from our experiences with managing a mine action focused trust fund, to support the President, the Working Group and State Parties as you continue your deliberations on whether and how to proceed on this matter, including with respect to any upcoming consultations.

As distinguished delegates may be aware, one possible option for States Parties to consider could be to establish a dedicated "window" within the existing United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action to receive and manage targeted funding assistance to meet the aims of the Convention. Such an approach would minimize start-up transaction costs, offer a clearly identifiable channel for targeted support within a mechanism that already operates under, and is compliant with, established UN financial rules and regulations, has oversight experience and capacity, and a global reach. Should there be interest in exploring the viability of such an option, or indeed any other options set out by the Working Group, UNMAS remains available to offer its technical experience and contribute to deliberations by States Parties, in any way that may be appropriate.

It is clear that more resources – political, financial and diplomatic – must be invested in mine action for the Convention and for the people living contaminated areas. We look forward to supporting efforts to ensure that no one and no State Party is left behind.



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Thank you.

END.