



# PHILIPPINES

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## **20th Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction**

25 November 2022

### Statement: General Exchange of Views

Mister President,

Since this is the first time for my delegation to take the floor, allow me to congratulate you on your election and to commend you, the office-holders and committee members, the ISU, and our civil society partners for the excellent work that you have done throughout this week and in during the intersessional period.

We take the floor to register the unwavering commitment of the Philippines and the Filipino people to this landmark convention. We join the humanitarian disarmament community in celebrating the twenty-fifth year of this Convention.

The Philippines takes pride in leading the way towards the strong international norms rejecting the use of landmines, having denounced all landmines use even prior to this Convention's entry into force. This commitment is rooted in our strong ironclad commitment to international humanitarian law.

While we are not a mines-contaminated country, we suffer from sporadic attacks by non-state actors including the terrorist New People's Army, which continues to justify the use of landmines,

falsely characterizing them as the poor man's weapon. Yet we know that these weapons of death and destruction kill and maim the poor.

In addressing these threats, we have pursued an inclusive whole-of-society approach that brings together state security forces and agencies, civil society groups including the Philippine Campaign to Ban Landmines, and grassroots communities. In several instances, cooperation among communities and authorities have led to successful operations against these destructive weapons.

We support the strengthening of a normative framework against the use of mines by armed non-state actors, including terrorist groups such as the New People's Army.

We also support global initiatives to address the social and development challenges posed by mines, including through robust international cooperation and assistance under the Convention.

We reiterate the importance of strong national ownership of mine action, including reducing the affected states' reliance on foreign technical expertise. Equally important for the Philippines is the centrality of mine victims in the Convention's work on clearance and risk education. The balanced participation of women and men, and all stakeholders, is crucial in this regard.

Finally, we pay tribute to our civil society partners, national demining authorities, and community leaders and members that work together to sustain the ecosystem that supports the work of this Convention.

I thank you, Mister President.