

Press Release



Princess Astrid of Belgium to serve as Special Envoy of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention

Geneva, Brussels 20 June 2013 – Her Royal Highness Princess Astrid of Belgium, a longtime advocate of landmine survivors' rights, will add her voice as Special Envoy representing the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, or Ottawa Convention, in worldwide efforts to promote the landmark treaty.

Princess Astrid who has been part of the landmine movement for more than a decade will promote the Convention at a diplomatic level in states that have not yet joined the treaty. "I feel honored in having been called to promote the need for universal adoption of the Convention," said Princess Astrid.

"While landmine casualties have decreased in no small part thanks to the Convention, anti-personnel mines are still the source of dreadful damage and suffering. In 2011 alone, 4,286 new victims – or 12 victims everyday – were recorded, most of them civilians. It is clear that efforts need to continue to end the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel mines."

Since 2000, Princess Astrid has represented Belgium in several of the Convention's Meetings of the States Parties including in Geneva, Thailand, Jordan and most recently, in the *Cartagena Summit on a Mine-Free World*.

It was at the *Cartagena Summit* where states and international and non-governmental organizations noted the "dire need" to engage states not party to the Convention to ensure the universal acceptance of the treaty. Since then, the European Union has heeded to the call providing funds through a Council Decision to assist in the advocacy to be carried out by Princess Astrid and other Special Envoys.

In addition to Princess Astrid of Belgium, His Royal Highness Prince Mired Raad Al Hussein of Jordan and landmine advocate and Grammy-award winner Juanes, are joining in worldwide efforts to promote the treaty that bans the use, stockpile, production and transfer of anti-personnel mines.

The Convention, was adopted in Oslo in 1997, opened for signature in Ottawa the same year and entered into force on 1 March 1999.

Of the Convention's 161 parties, 155 no longer hold stocks of anti-personnel mines; together the States Parties have destroyed over 44.5 million stockpiled anti-personnel mines.

Since the Convention entered into force, 25 of 59 States Parties that have reported mined areas have declared completion of their mine clearance obligation; demining has resulted in millions of square meters of once-dangerous land being released for normal human activity.

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For photos of Princess Astrid at the Cartagena Summit, visit:

<http://www.flickr.com/search/?q=princess%20astrid&w=47843173@N02>. For press information, contact: Laila Rodriguez press@apminebanconvention.org or +41 (0) 22 906 1656. Find us on our [website](#), [Facebook](#), [Flickr](#) or [Twitter](#).

Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Implementation Support Unit