

LANDMINE ACTION

Standing Committee on General Status and Operation of the Ottawa Convention, 31 May 2002

I would like briefly to add to the remarks made by the distinguished representative of the Government of Sudan.

There has been growing recognition of the humanitarian problems faced by Sudan because of landmines and other explosive remnants of war. This is due to the tireless efforts of our Sudanese colleagues especially members of the Sudan Campaign to Ban Landmines and OSIL, with whom my organisation, Landmine Action, has been working since 1998.

It is recognised by both main parties to the conflict that the existing problems faced by the people of Sudan will be multiplied many times over in the event that displaced people and refugees are able to return to their communities. That's why, with the support of the Government of Sudan and the SPLM/A and the EU, the network of Sudanese mine action organisations is embarking on a cross-conflict data collection programme, in advance of peace, and in this respect Landmine Action has been asked to act as the neutral cross-conflict link.

In addition, all parties involved have recognised that landmines may undermine the ceasefire in the Nuba Mountains region. The EU has funded an emergency response in the Nuba Mountains, now being implemented by the Sudanese network in conjunction with Landmine Action.

It is welcome that the UNMAS have now joined in these efforts, and all concerned look forward to future cooperation.

Both main parties to the conflict have expressed a commitment to the objective of ending the use of landmines. Both also agree that the way to develop a sustainable humanitarian response to the problems caused by landmines is by building local capacity.

We believe that timely and appropriate support of various kinds by states parties can help create the conditions to bring signatory states closer to ratification. We hope that this support will continue in the case in the Sudan.

Landmine Action
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