



THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

MESSAGE TO THIRTEENTH MEETING OF THE STATES PARTIES
TO THE CONVENTION ON THE PROHIBITION
OF THE USE, STOCKPILING, PRODUCTION AND TRANSFER
OF ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES AND ON THEIR DESTRUCTION

Geneva, 2 December 2013

Delivered by Mr. Michael Møller, acting Director-General of UNOG...

It gives me great pleasure to greet the Thirteenth Meeting of the States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention.

Fourteen years after its entry into force, the treaty has recorded commendable achievements, with real dividends measured on the ground in the lives saved, roads and airports cleared, schools reopened, land returned to agricultural use and the safe return of refugees and displaced persons.

Nevertheless, the Convention's goals are not yet entirely fulfilled. Anti-personnel mines continue to kill and maim.

In 2013, the use of antipersonnel mines was reported in Syria, Myanmar and in Nagorno-Karabakh -- one territory and two states that are not party to the treaty but nevertheless have acted against the norm established by this Convention. I add my voice to that of States that have condemned this use.

I am also deeply concerned by the allegations of use reported this year in Turkey, Sudan, South Sudan and Yemen - all of which are parties to the Convention. I urge these states to recall the commitments made under this treaty never to use anti-personnel mines and urge all other States parties to assist in the clarification of these allegations and act accordingly should such allegations be confirmed.

The United Nations will continue to support States parties in their efforts to eliminate anti-personnel mines that are under their control as well as in other States affected by explosive remnants of war. The United Nations Strategy on Mine Action 2013-2018 encapsulates the strong commitment of the Organization to saving lives and creating conditions conducive to sustainable peace, security, development and respect for human rights.

I welcome your continuing cooperation to address the enormous humanitarian consequences caused by anti-personnel mines, thus averting further sorrow and suffering. This is an inspiring example of global unity and resolve. At this meeting, you are expected to take a decision on holding your Third Review Conference in Mozambique. I welcome the convening of this important event in Africa. This would underscore both the ongoing human tragedy caused by anti-personnel mines across the continent, but also the tremendous progress that has been made in the pursuit of an Africa without anti-personnel mines.

I urge all States that have not done so to accede as soon as possible to the Convention. Anti-personnel mines have no place in a civilized world. I thank you all for your commitment to rid the world of these unacceptable and indiscriminate weapons.