



European Union
Statement by

**Mr Andras Kos, Minister Counsellor,
Permanent Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations**

APMBC - 13th Meeting of the States Parties

(Geneva, 2-5 December 2013)

Universalisation

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- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -

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EU statement on Universalisation

Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The following countries align themselves with this declaration: Turkey^{*}, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia[†], Montenegro, Iceland[‡], Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova.

The European Union is pleased to see the significant progress achieved in the fight against the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel landmines in recent years. With the accession of Poland in June bringing the "Ottawa community" to 161 members, this is the first annual meeting where all 28 European Union Member States are now united under the Convention. This further reinforces our determination and commitment to achieve our zero-victim target and, ultimately, a world free of anti-personnel mines. We urge those States not yet Party to the Ottawa Convention to consider ratifying or acceding to it in the near future. We welcome the attendance at this meeting of a number of States not Party to the Convention.

In Cartagena, States Parties agreed to seize every opportunity to promote ratification of and accession to the Convention, particularly in regions with low adherence and to promote and encourage the full implementation of its norms. The EU Council Decision in support of the implementation of the Cartagena Action Plan, which was adopted in November 2012, has a strong universalisation component: it provides support for a High Level Task Force to engage with the leaders of up to six States not party to the Convention at ministerial or a higher level regarding adherence to the Convention. The High Level Task Force includes HRH Prince Mired of Jordan, HRH Princess Astrid of Belgium and Colombian international music celebrity Juanes. The first mission took place on 16-19 October 2013 with HRH Prince Mired and the Director of the ISU travelling to Beijing and Nanjing, China. Discussions are ongoing regarding further visits of this kind.

In order to address some of the specific concerns raised by States not Parties to the Convention, the European Union is funding a study on border security without the use of anti-personnel mines. We hope that the results of this study will provide significant input to address the most frequently perceived barrier to accession to the Convention and also contribute to our further universalisation efforts.

The fulfilment of the objectives of the Convention is a collective task. We wish to thank all those who contribute to those efforts, especially Belgium for its very important work as coordinator of the Universalisation Contact Group. We particularly welcome its leadership and focused proposals on how we could enhance and take forward this process.

^{*} Candidate country

[†] The Candidate countries former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia as well as potential candidate countries Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

[‡] Candidate Country Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.

Universalisation of the Convention should remain a priority for the Third Review Conference and the Maputo Action Plan as well. Current challenges call for a more targeted and sustainable approach. The upcoming Review Conference will give us the opportunity to reflect on this important issue. The European Union will continue to be actively engaged in this process.

Thank you.