

15th MEETING OF STATES PARTIES
ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION
(OTTAWA CONVENTION)

STATEMENT BY CANADA - SANTIAGO, CHILE - DECEMBER 2016

COMPLIANCE

Canada is concerned by news of some initial, presently unverified reports on the use of antipersonnel mines by some States Parties.

We are also concerned by the new use of antipersonnel mines by government forces in Myanmar, North Korea, and Syria, as well as by non-state groups in Afghanistan, Colombia, Iraq, Libya, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, Syria, Ukraine, and Yemen.

And, Canada remains concerned by past allegations involving States Parties to the Convention and regrets that four States Parties are subject to such allegations. Canada condemns any use of anti-personnel mines and calls on any States that may be using them to cease doing so and to join the Ottawa Convention without delay.

Canada has served on the Committee on Cooperative Compliance during the past two years. We are grateful to the Belgian and Chilean presidencies as well as the other committee members, and support from civil society, which have set the work of this committee on the right track during its first two years.

And we encourage all States Parties to bear in mind the limited mandate of the Committee to handle these sensitive allegations on our behalf in order to keep the norms of the Convention strong. It is based on cooperation and transparency rather than investigation. This means that the Committee can receive information on allegations from a number of sources, but it cannot itself independently verify the information that it receives.

This is not a criticism of the Committee, it is a reminder to all states that we must do our part in ensuring compliance with the Convention. It remains a decision for all States Parties to consider whether any use of the Convention's Article 8 measures is required.

As noted in the Committee's report, a common element among the four cases is that they have mined areas under their jurisdiction but outside of their control, which are the subject of allegations of use. These cases will need to remain open until those States conclude appropriate investigations in those areas, and complete a dialogue with the Committee on each of their findings.

In such cases, implementation of the measures outlined in Action 29 of the Maputo Action Plan can be particularly useful. Even when States do not have access to mined areas, they can build the domestic norms against the use, stockpiling, and transfer of

these weapons by establishing or strengthening laws, regulations, doctrine, and policies, and raising awareness about the Convention and its humanitarian imperative.