

**Statement of H.R.H. Prince Mired Raad Zeid Al-Hussein of Jordan
Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Special Envoy
Universalization
30 November 2018 – 17MSP**

Madame President,

Dear Friends,

Universalizing the Convention is one of the most important aims of our Convention to end the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel mines.

Hence...it is truly a great honor for me to present to you this brief statement on universalization. As mentioned earlier in the week. . . during my address in the opening session. I have considered it a great privilege to represent this Convention as one of the Special Envoys' alongside HRH Princess Astrid.

During the 2nd Review Conference in 2009 in Cartagena the idea of high level engagement was floated and the Norwegian Presidency at the time promoted and sponsored the idea. The view was, and still is, that if we seriously want to see movement on the universalization front then we must engage States not party at the highest of levels possible. . . (in addition to grass roots action of course). This was the premise of the whole initiative. And I was happily recruited to fulfill this role by using my position to get my foot in the door and engage governments and decision makers on this issue. As a result, I conducted over the years missions to the US, China, South Korea, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Tuvalu, Singapore, Tonga, Bahrain, and most recently Myanmar. I also conducted separate visits to Libya and Azerbaijan, where I did venture to raise the question concerning possible accession. In addition to the above I also visited Palau to attend a symposium on the contamination in the Pacific left over from WWII. . . . and Fiji where I met with the Pacific Islands Forum to discuss further possible accessions. I also conducted three implementation missions to Ecuador, Peru and Sri Lanka. . . to encourage them further to do the good work they are doing.

In all the countries that I have mentioned, I was fortunate to meet with their respective leaders...4 presidents, 1 vice - president, 3 prime ministers, 1 governor general, 1 national security adviser, a crown prince and many ministers, vice - ministers, chiefs of staff and other government and military officials.

What I concluded from all these missions was the reaffirmation of the importance of high-level engagement. The engagement was crucial because I quickly realized that in most countries the issue of landmines was not on the radar screen whatsoever and in many cases it was the first time that the leaders I met were obliged to even consider the issue.

I humbly believe that we should continue with this type of engagement, whether conducted by me, HRH Princess Astrid, or someone else because it is an effective method, alongside other initiatives that should run concurrently in order for more success on the universalization front to be attained. A flurry of diplomatic activity and grass roots action should be devised by all those concerned in order

to affect real change. Only then will we see more states acceding.

Next year we will enter a Review Conference year which will give us a chance to reinvigorate universalization discussions and encourage those that are still on the sidelines to join the majority of States.

I am thankful to the European Union for its Council Decision which noted the importance of Universalization and contains actions to promote it. And through these actions we have been able to visit Sri Lanka, which today thankfully joins us as a State Party and Myanmar which has yet to take this vital decision.

I am grateful for all those States Parties and organizations working within States not Party which continuously engage government officials on this matter and keep it high on their agenda. This is crucial. Continuous advocacy will, I believe, eventually lead to success.

From my part, I stand ready and willing to continue my work in support of the President and look forward to working closely with Norway next year.

I must add that, the mandate of Universalization cannot rest solely on one State but must be ingrained into all our discourse with States not party. Continuing our dialogue of listening to their concerns and national circumstances and proposing ways forward in the Convention's traditional spirit of cooperation.

I personally am looking forward to your updates, to the possibility of engaging your authorities in discussions on the Convention and thank you for your engagement.

Thank you