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**Speech**

by

**Ambassador Jürg Streuli**

**Head of the Swiss delegation**

**6<sup>th</sup> Conference of the State parties to the Mine Ban Treaty**

**29 novembre 2005, Zagreb**

**Item 11 - Consideration of the general status and operation of the Convention  
(a) Universalizing the Convention**

**“The role of States in bringing armed non-state actors to renounce using  
Antipersonnel mines”**

Mrs. President,

Let me in addition to my general statement yesterday elaborate a bit more on the question of non state actors, being aware that this is a very sensitive issue, but our efforts towards the universalisation of the mine ban will only succeed if we take into consideration all factors, among them the use of antipersonnel mines by armed non state actors.

Mrs. President,

In the past three years, Switzerland engaged in reflections on how States can contribute to bringing armed non-state groups to renounce using antipersonnel mines. In the course and as part of this reflection process, it organized in October 2004 in Montreux a workshop on the question of antipersonnel mines and armed non state actors, that allowed to explore areas of action by governments in this field. Switzerland also organised a meeting on the question of furthering the implementation of action 46 of the Nairobi Action Plan in the margins of the intersessionals in Geneva in June 2005.

Indeed, the Nairobi Action Plan provides us with a welcome opportunity to concretize our endeavours in focusing mine action also on areas under the control of armed non-state actors. Action 46 provides us with a ready tool to promote mine action in such situations. Switzerland is convinced that the States party to the mine ban treaty, should seek to address and diminish the plight of the civilian population by implementing action 46 in the coming 5 years thoroughly. International Organizations, NGOs and dedicated think tanks should also contribute to this endeavour.

At the meeting in Geneva in June 2005, Switzerland presented a thought paper drafted by Professors David Capie from Wellington University and Pablo Policzer from Calgary University on 'Moving forward in implementing Action 46' which we hope will constitute a basis for further reflection and action to be taken to address the issue of mine action and armed non-state groups. The thought paper outlines a certain number of recommendations, which are primarily directed towards States:

- It advocates for granting access for governmental and non-governmental actors to areas under the control of non-state armed groups in order to support mine action activities.
- It calls for openness by all actors involved to allow for contacts with armed groups to take place in a view to promote the implementation of action 46 of the Nairobi Action Plan.
- The paper also sets out specific conditions for such contacts to happen and to avoid unnecessary and potentially harmful politicisation of the issue at stake.

Mrs. President,

Taking into account and depending on the interest raised around this debate, Switzerland is ready to pursue its endeavours. In doing so, we hope to serve as a catalyser in bringing about concrete action and initiatives. We therefore envisage holding a further seminar on the implementation of Action 46 in spring or early summer 2006.

My delegation is happy to provide you here at our seat with the Montreux Workshop report, as well as the thought paper on 'Moving Forward on Action 46' and the report of the meeting held in the margins of the intersessionals in Geneva in June of this year. I and the members of my delegation are looking forward to discussing this issue further with you now and at the future gatherings of the States party to the Mine ban treaty.

Thank you for your attention