

29 November 2005

**STATEMENT BY THE TURKISH DELEGATION
ON UNIVERSALISATION**

Madam Vice President,

Since I am taking the floor for the first time, I would like to congratulate H.E. Ms. Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovič on her election as the President of the Sixth Meeting of the States Parties of the Ottawa Convention. We have no doubt that under her able leadership, this Meeting will produce substantial results. Our congratulations also go to all Vice-Presidents. We would also like to thank the Government of Croatia for the generous hospitality accorded to us.

Madam Vice President,

When we study the trend of universalisation, we observe a positive, progressively evolving trend. We welcome the adhesion of four more States, namely Ethiopia, Latvia, Bhutan and Vanuatu to the Convention since the Nairobi Summit. At this juncture, it seems that we should exert more effort on geographic regions that lag behind in terms of accession to the Convention. In this context, Turkey shall continue to play its part with a view to raising awareness on the Convention in the neighbouring regions.

Madam Vice President,

My delegation would also like to seize this opportunity to place on record once again Turkey's views on the role of 'armed non-state actors'. It is indeed a fact of life that abidance of the 'armed non-state actors' using anti-personnel landmines by the provisions of the Convention is important for the full implementation of the Convention. However, it is also a fact of life that there is no agreed definition of the term 'armed non-state actors' and as such, this term is inclusive of terrorist organisations. In fact, some terrorist organisations try to use this blanket cover of 'armed non-state actors' for asserting a political and legal status and for international recognition. This creates a conundrum and it is clear that there is no 'one size fits all' solution to this.

The Ottawa Convention, as a legally binding document confers rights and obligations to the States Parties. However, the Convention does not contain any provision regarding 'armed non-state actors' and it does not authorise the direct participation of NGOs in the Conventions's implementation. On the other hand, the Nairobi Plan of Action, which is a political document, assigns in Action No.46 certain tasks to the States Parties concerning 'armed non-state actors', provided that they are "in a position to do so" and "as appropriate".

Therefore, Madam Vice President, we take the view that when engagement with 'armed non-state actors' is contemplated, the concerned State Party should be informed and its consent would be necessary for such an engagement to take place. We happily note that this view is reflected in paragraph 17 of the draft Zagreb Progress Report.

I thank you.