

Thank you Madam President,

As this is the first time that my Delegation takes the floor, I would like to start by congratulating you on your role in ~~the Presidency of~~ ^{CHAIRING} the Seventh Meeting of the States Parties of the Ottawa Convention. And I can assure you our fullest support.

Madam President,

Brazil has an unequivocal commitment to the Ottawa Convention's goals. As you may know, in January 2003, months before due time, my country destroyed its stockpile of operational landmines. This is especially relevant as Brazil is **the** State Party of the Ottawa Convention with the largest terrestrial frontier, 16.688 kilometers bordering 10 neighbor countries. Neither Brazil, nor its neighbors, had never ever seed landmines in each other frontiers. The fact that Brazil and its neighbors have ratified the Convention and destroyed their mines stockpiles, or are destroying them, bears witness of decades of peaceful relationship in South America. More recently, the strengthening of commercial ties, and a same vision for the region's future, led to the creation of the South American Community of Nations, which acronym CASA, means home in the Spanish and Portuguese languages.

Brazil does not have landmine fields or mined areas. The country, however, has engaged in humanitarian demining operations of the Organization of the American States (OAS). Brazilian military personnel are currently in Central America, in the MARMINCA, ~~as well as~~ in the OAS Demining Support Mission in South America (MARMINAS), in the Peruvian-Ecuadorian border, *AS WELL AS THE OAS MISSION IN COLOMBIA.*

Nevertheless, with our limited resources, both the Brazilian Government and the Brazilian society believe that more humanitarian actions should be accomplished. Therefore, Brazil herewith express the intention to expand its assistance provided within the framework of the Ottawa Convention and we are willing to explore new cooperation strategies. And it is my honor to inform that an initial contact on the subject was already made with a specific Delegation.

Among the new feasible assistance modalities I wish to highlight the sending of Brazilian health staff, with expertise in traumatology and orthopedy, in order to train health personnel in the affected countries. Within differentiated cooperation arrangements, doctors from landmine affected countries could attend courses or other training activities in Brazilian health institutions.

Brazil has competent institutions in the above mentioned medical fields: the SARA Network of rehabilitation hospitals; and the INTO (The National Institute ~~of~~ ^{of} Trauma-Orthopedy), an internationally known medical reference center on the treatment of ~~diseases~~ ^{PATHOLOGIES} and orthopedic traumas of medium and high complexity.

The National Institute ~~for~~ ^{of} Trauma-Orthopedy is experimented in training and capacity building of medical teams in situations of limited human and material resources. The Institute realizes emergency assistance missions on Brazilian cities and rural areas that do not have trauma-orthopedy medical care of medium and high complexity. Moreover, the INTO has already established ^{INTER-}institutional agreements with foreign medical centers through which training is provided by distance learning techniques.

Madam President,

Such a pool of medical staff and capabilities might be of great usefulness in cooperation initiatives with landmines affected countries, preferably within the framework of "mine actions" managed by international organization or in agreements with interested countries.

To summarize, we have the doctors, we have the expertise, we have limited financial resources, but we are willing to cooperate.

I Thank you Madam President