

# Press Release



## **President of the Convention banning anti-personnel mines calls on States not to default on their obligations**

*Geneva, 29 February 2012* – The president of the international treaty banning anti-personnel mines has called on the international community not to default on their obligations to assist in the efforts to support survivors and to free mined land from its deadly bondage. The call was made at a high level meeting of the Conference on Disarmament on the eve of the thirteenth anniversary of the entry into force of this landmark humanitarian, development and disarmament instrument.

H.E. PRAK Sokhonn, who presides over the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, or Ottawa Convention, and serves as the Minister Attached to the Prime Minister of Cambodia and as Vice-President of the Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority, traveled to Geneva to commemorate the day thirteen years ago when the Convention took effect.

H.E. PRAK Sokhonn reminded the Conference on Disarmament that “the deliberations on disarmament that take place here in Geneva and in other arenas are a means to a humanitarian end,” and called on disarmament fora to “produce results that will make a difference in the lives of people everywhere.”

“Notwithstanding the Convention’s success, it is abundantly clear that it will take many more years to ensure that the Convention lives up to its promise to end the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel mines.” said H.E. PRAK Sokhonn.

“An ongoing commitment to this effort often means a financial commitment,” added H.E. PRAK Sokhonn. “Coming to Europe where economic challenges weigh heavily on the minds of many, I am realistic about certain present-day realities. Nevertheless, we accepted solemn obligations, and we agreed, without deadline or expiry date, to support one another. Therefore, while governments must not turn their back on financial realities, equally we must not default on our obligations to assist survivors and free mined land from its deadly bondage.”

H.E. PRAK Sokhonn also called upon States not parties to accede to the Convention, noting that several members of the Conference on Disarmament have not yet done so. “By exercising your leadership by joining with us, you have an opportunity to contribute to a disarmament success story,” said H.E. PRAK Sokhonn.

Representatives of the Convention’s Presidency will participate in two other events in Geneva on 1 March to commemorate the Convention’s entry into force. On 1 March at 10:30 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Cambodia will join the Nobel Peace Prize-laureate International Campaign to Ban Landmines in a press launch of the “Lend your leg for a mine-free world” campaign. The same day at 13:00, the campaign will be launched before representatives of permanent missions and Geneva-based organizations. Both events will include the presentation of a video featuring UN Secretary-General Ban ki-Moon rolling up his pant-leg in solidarity with landmine survivors around the world.

**AP Mine Ban Convention Implementation Support Unit**

## **The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention**

The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention was adopted in Oslo in 1997 and opened for signature in Ottawa the same year. It **entered into force on 1 March 1999**.

To date 159 States are parties to the Convention; 155 of them no longer hold stocks of anti-personnel mines.

Over 44.5 million mines have been destroyed by the States Parties. 34 of 50 States that at one time manufactured anti-personnel mines are now bound by the Convention's ban on production. Most other States have put in place moratoria on production and / or transfers of mines.

Demining has resulted in millions of square metres of once dangerous land being released for normal human activity.

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For more information, interviews or information regarding the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention please email: [Press@APMineBanConvention.org](mailto:Press@APMineBanConvention.org) or contact Sophie Delfolie at +41 (0) 22 906 1638. Connect with the Convention through our [website](#), [Facebook](#), [Flickr](#) or [Twitter](#).