

# Press Release



## **Poland joins the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention: All European Union members now bound by the treaty**

*Geneva and New York, 27 December 2012* – Poland has become the 161<sup>st</sup> State to ban anti-personnel mines after depositing its instrument of ratification of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, or *Ottawa Convention*, at the United Nations' headquarters in New York. The Convention will enter into force for Poland **on 1 June 2013**. With Poland's ratification, the European Union as a whole, is now bound by the treaty which bans the use, stockpiling, production, and transfer of anti-personnel mines and requires their destruction.

The Convention's leadership congratulated Poland and welcomed the European Union's commitment to a total ban on landmines. "Poland's ratification signals its strong commitment to this landmark disarmament and humanitarian movement," said Matjaz Kovacic, Slovenian Ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva and the Convention's President. "All 27 countries of the European Union are now bound to never, under any circumstances, use anti-personnel mines. Moreover, the European Union is united in its commitment to cooperate and assist other nations in destroying mines and assisting the victims of these weapons."

Remigius Henczel, Poland's Ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva noted at the Convention's 3-7 December 2012 Twelfth Meeting of the States Parties, that Poland's commitment to a world without mines goes back more than a decade to when Poland signed the Convention in 1997. The Ambassador also noted that Poland has not used, produced or exported anti-personnel mines since 1998, and that Poland has already begun to destroy its stockpile of anti-personnel mines. Remigius Henczel said Poland is "ready to actively participate in endeavours promoting the universal adherence to the Convention and its humanitarian impact."

The Convention was adopted in Oslo in 1997, opened for signature in Ottawa the same year and entered into force on 1 March 1999.

Over 44.5 million stockpiled mines have been destroyed by the States Parties. Of the 50 States that at one time manufactured anti-personnel mines, 34 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.

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