

# Press Release



## Anti-landmines movement meets to overcome remaining challenges

Geneva, 21 May 2012 – The annual committee meetings of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, or *Ottawa Convention*, opened today in Geneva. With over 400 delegates and approximately 100 States expected, these meetings amount to the world's largest gathering of mine action experts and officials.

The meetings of the Convention's five Standing Committees are taking place half-way between the landmark 2009 *Cartagena Summit on a Mine-Free World* and the Convention's third five-year review in 2014. "As such, they provide us with a chance to take stock of the application of the *Cartagena Action Plan 2010-2014*," said H.E. PRAK Sokhonn, the senior Cambodian Minister who presides over the Convention. The *Cartagena Action Plan*, which was adopted at a high political level in 2009, contains 67 specific commitments intended to support enhanced implementation and promotion of the Convention over a five-year period.

"We have the opportunity to conduct a mid-term assessment of our efforts, recording in a progress report later this year the challenges that we have encountered and the work that remains in meeting our *Cartagena Action Plan* commitments," added H.E. Matjaž Kovačič of Slovenia, who will take over as the Convention's President in December.

The packed agenda for the week of 21-25 May will include updates by States Parties to the Convention which are in the process of fulfilling key obligations. There remain 36 States Parties that still must complete mine clearance and 4 that must destroy remaining stockpiles of anti-personnel mines. In addition, 27 States Parties have indicated that they are responsible for the well-being and the guarantee of the rights of significant numbers of landmine survivors.

### Universal acceptance of the Convention

- The Convention's Special Envoy, His Royal Highness Prince Mired Raad Al Hussein of Jordan, will provide an update on efforts to promote adherence to the Convention by States that have not yet joined.
- Somalia, which is considering acceding to the Convention, will provide an update of its process. Somalia is the only State in Sub-Sahara Africa that has not yet joined the Convention.

### Stockpile destruction

- Belarus, Greece and Ukraine – three States Parties that have failed to comply with the four-year deadline to destroy or ensure the destruction of stockpiled anti-personnel mines, will report on their stockpile destruction efforts.
- The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia will give additional details on its recent destruction of a previously unknown stockpile of anti-personnel mines.

### Mine clearance

AP Mine Ban Convention Implementation Support Unit

- Jordan will inform the Standing Committee on Mine Clearance that it has completed the clear of all known minefields, thus fulfilling its Convention obligations. A formal declaration will be made during the Twelfth Meeting of the States Parties (12MSP) in December.
- Afghanistan, Angola, Cyprus and Zimbabwe will be elaborating on the requests that they have submitted to the Convention's President to extend their mine clearance deadlines.
- The States Parties will debate steps that can be taken to develop a rational response to address situations where States Parties, which have never reported mine clearance obligations, discover previously unknown mined areas.

#### **Assistance to landmine survivors**

- Delegations will discuss best practices to overcome the persistent challenge of translating their landmine victim assistance efforts into tangible improvements in the quality of daily life of mine victims.
- A full-day experts' parallel programme will be staged to enhance efforts to implement national victim assistance / disability plans and to monitor implementation of these plans.

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

The AP Mine Ban Convention was adopted in Oslo in 1997, opened for signature in Ottawa the same year and entered into force in 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. 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 parties have put in place moratoria on production and / or transfers of mines.

Of the 56 States Parties that have reported mined areas, 20 have completed implementation of their mine clearance obligations. 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 Laila Rodriguez at +41 (0)22 906 1656. Connect with the Convention through our [website](#), [Facebook](#), [Flickr](#) or [Twitter](#).