

Press Release



For the second time, a President of the convention banning anti-personnel mines calls on Syria to stop using landmines

Geneva, 14 March 2012 – The president of the international treaty banning anti-personnel mines has called on Syria to cease its use of anti-personnel landmines. “The vast majority of States have banned this insidious weapon,” said H.E. PRAK Sokhonn of Cambodia, who presides over the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, or Ottawa Convention. “Syria needs to recognise the inhumanity of landmine use and that by planting these weapons Syrians will be harmed for years to come.”

H.E. PRAK Sokhonn, who also serves as the Minister Attached to the Prime Minister of Cambodia and as Vice-President of the Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority, made his comments after reports surfaced pointing to the Syrian military in the past month planting a band of anti-personnel mines along stretches of Syria’s border with Turkey.

Syria is not a party to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, which has been embraced by 159 States to date. “Most of the world understands that anti-personnel mines are inhumane and must be eliminated,” said H.E. PRAK Sokhonn. “Moreover, these weapons are largely ineffective as evidenced in Syria where news reports point to civilians still escaping to safety in neighbouring countries and volunteers removing mines planted by Syrian forces.”

In November 2011, H.E. PRAK Sokhonn’s predecessor, H.E. Gazmend TURDIU of Albania, also expressed “deep concern” regarding new Syrian mine use along its border with Lebanon and called on Syria “to stop laying landmines and to remove these indiscriminate weapons.”

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. 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.

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 or contact Kerry Brinkert at +41 (0) 22 906 1637. Connect with the Convention through our [website](#), [Facebook](#), [Flickr](#) or [Twitter](#).

AP Mine Ban Convention Implementation Support Unit