

**Address by Her Excellency
The Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson
Governor General of Canada
on the Occasion of The Nairobi Summit on a
Mine-Free World: First Review Conference of the
States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition
of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of
Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction
Nairobi, Kenya, Thursday, December 2, 2004**



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I am pleased to be here in Nairobi on this very significant occasion. I would like, first, to thank the Kenyan Government, Ambassador Wolfgang Petritsch, and the United Nations for their leadership in organizing this Summit.

My presence here, as Governor General of Canada, speaks of the great importance which Canada gives to the Ottawa Convention, its implementation and the growth of its influence. It is particularly appropriate that this Review Conference is taking place in Africa, a continent that is determined to overcome the scourge that anti-personnel landmines represent. It is a scourge. Afflicted countries are living with a curse which can and will be overcome, but which continues to carry an insidious and fearful power.

Martin Luther said that everything that is done in the world is done by hope. For my country, Canada, this gathering's overwhelming message must be one of hope. We hope for a world free of the threats posed by mines, and an end to their creation. We hope for an end to the mutilation and death they indiscriminately cause. We hope for strong action on mines as part of our strategies to build peace, and await the benefits of the development that will follow upon the investments that we make. We hope for a wholehearted embrace of the ambitious and visionary Action Plan that this Conference will adopt, entrenching our steadfast contributions to peace. As we all know, peace is not merely the absence of war. It begins with a state of mind—a disposition towards benevolence, for confidence, for justice—and grows through our concerted and vigorous action.

Seven years ago tomorrow—December 3, 1997—much of the world came to Canada to sign the Ottawa Convention. It had been ably negotiated in Oslo at the invitation of Norway, and under the chairmanship of South Africa. Much has been said, but it bears repeating, about the partnership which is the very lifeblood of this Convention. We have become necessary to each other, in collaborations among landmine survivors; between civil society and governments; between mine-affected and donor states. This partnership reflects a growing global consensus to eradicate these hideous weapons. Not only is it founded in hope, but it is also a powerful source of hope for future international cooperation.

We have decided that we will help each other to put an end to these crude and cruel weapons. We said, seven years ago, that the killing and maiming of about 26,000 people a year was unacceptable. We have allowed ourselves to be necessary to each other and to work towards the same goal. This is all that multilateralism means, and it has resulted in a comprehensive framework to address the crisis of social instability that landmines cause.

We have put ourselves on the line by signing this Convention. We have decided that we will complete the ban on these weapons; that we will destroy stockpiles and clear mined land within defined time limits; that we will help mine-affected countries to fulfill their obligations; and, that we will assist victims in every way possible. This is an inclusive approach, and one which has been working. Nearly three-quarters of the world's countries—143, and with Ethiopia's most welcome announcement this week, soon to be 144— are parties to the Convention. Only 15 nations retain a production capacity, down from over 50 in 1999. There is no longer any official trade, and new uses of APMs are relatively rare. Signatory nations have destroyed over 37 million stockpiled mines, and large tracts of land have been cleared and returned to productive use.

Canadians are proud of the role that we have played, in cooperation with so many of you, to reach the point we are at today, five years after the remarkably rapid enactment of the Ottawa Convention. We do not forget, and we must not, that making peace is a demanding and costly process, though ultimately much less expensive than making war. Canada is proud to have committed over \$200 million in support of mine initiatives in

Afghanistan, in Iraq, in Mozambique, and in dozens of other countries throughout the world. We address the needs of survivors, we help with mine clearance and risk education, and we undertake stockpile destruction. Always in the forefront of our minds is the need to universalize the Convention.

When we consider that over \$2 billion U.S. have been invested in mine action and victim assistance, it is clear that we can summon the will and the resources. However, we still face great challenges in mine clearance, and the 10-year clearance deadline looms for many states. There are still 15,000 to 20,000 new victims annually. Canada is very disturbed by reports of the recent use of anti-personnel landmines in four countries in Europe and Asia, as described in *Landmine Monitor*, and we call for all such use to cease immediately. We deplore as well the continuing use of mines by non-state actors. It cannot be justified under any circumstances in the name of defence: the extremely limited utility of these weapons is vastly outweighed by the human cost, which is mainly borne by non-combatants. We, who are part of this Convention and who adhere to its requirements, must act for the victims, and with the crucial states in which so many millions of deployed and stockpiled mines remain to be destroyed. Although we have had remarkable progress in the last five years, there is absolutely no room for complacency.

We have, though, gained valuable experience, particularly through the leadership of the landmine survivors themselves. We must concentrate on

their needs and their rights, as was so eloquently noted at the Survivors' Summit earlier this week. But we can also learn from them, and find inspiration in the work they are doing. They offer us hope and determination that can guide us through the crucial years ahead.

Finally, we welcome the presence here of so many representatives of States not yet Party to the Convention. As Chair of the Human Security Network, Canada welcomed the Network's September Declaration, including its call for the further broadening of the Convention family. Many of the states joining us today as observers, along with others, are already making or considering important contributions of their own, consistent with the principles of the Ottawa Convention. We look forward to working closely with them to build upon our common commitment to building a more peaceful world, and to sharing the benefits that this will bring to all of us. As one wise man has said, "Do what you can, with what you have, where you are." We want a mine-free planet; we want the security and the creative possibility that this will bring to all nations and peoples. We urge you, therefore, to join the Convention as soon as possible.

Canada will continue to promote Convention acceptance, to assist in stockpile destruction, to fund mine clearance and community protection and, especially, to support the rehabilitation of the wounded. These are practical measures to which we have pledged our countries. We have the necessary resources, conviction and persistence, and we must believe that this combination is unbeatable. Thank you.