



## APPEL DE GENÈVE GENEVA CALL

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### **Statement by Geneva Call** Geneva - June 2010

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Considering the results of the Cartagena Summit, we welcome the emphasis that States Parties to the Anti-Personnel (AP) Mine Ban Convention are increasingly giving to the implementation of the treaty and on meeting deadlines set forth in the Convention.

We would like to inform the assembled participants of this meeting that two new signatories to Geneva Call's Deed of Commitment banning AP mines were added in April 2010: The Kurdistan Democratic Party- Iran and the Free Life Party of Kurdistan / Liberation Forces of Eastern Kurdistan both signed in April 2010, bringing to 41 the number of non-State actors (NSAs) who have pledged to ban the use, production, stockpiling and transfer of AP mines, thus contributing to the universalization of the treaty's norms.

However several NSAs are still reluctant to give up this weapon, and different methods have to be implemented, as we cannot abandon the civilian populations in these areas. In such cases, Geneva Call's progressive approach to mine action has been shown to be effective. Even non-signatory NSAs demonstrate by their interest and involvement in mine action activities that they are not indifferent to the issue and that there is room for movement towards the ban. Their step-by-step involvement may mirror their own internal debates and discussions. When they finally take the decision to ban AP mines after this process, they seem to be better prepared to adhere to their obligations than otherwise.

In line with the findings of the report on mine action activities undertaken by armed NSAs published by Geneva Call and soon to be made available, we would like to call upon the international community to redouble its efforts in two areas of concern:

1. A serious limitation facing those armed NSAs that have adopted positions against AP landmines and who wish to implement mine action is that they are not getting enough help and guidance to undertake such activities in accordance with international standards.

2. An important obstacle to monitoring and appropriate humanitarian mine action is a lack of access to conflict zones. This happens for many reasons: in some cases, the concerned State will not accept outside involvement. In others, the armed conflict itself is the hindrance, and security concerns hamper both Geneva Call's monitoring work as well as humanitarian assistance in the more general sense.

However, despite the difficulties, several examples in the report show that humanitarian mine action can and does take place, even during conflict. Many things are possible, including demining, victim assistance or mine risk education, though necessarily in a more limited way. By no means is an ongoing conflict an excuse to do nothing, and the mine action activities by NSAs demonstrate how even limited mine action can have a positive effect on communities suffering from the presence of landmines.

Finally, we would like to underline that none of these activities have conferred legitimacy on the armed NSAs who facilitate or participate in humanitarian mine action, whether or not they have signed Geneva Call's Deed of Commitment banning AP mines.

On the contrary, many people have been beneficiaries of these kinds of humanitarian activities.