

15th MEETING OF STATES PARTIES
ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION
(OTTAWA CONVENTION)

STATEMENT BY CANADA - SANTIAGO, CHILE - 28 NOVEMBER 2016

GENERAL OPENING REMARKS

Thank you, madam President.

To begin, we would like to congratulate you on your Presidency and assure you of our delegation's full support.

We are grateful to be united here in Santiago, Chile at the Meeting of States Parties of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention.

While great efforts have been made and 162 States have willingly decided to comply with the Convention, it is unfortunately not yet universal.

As Canada noted at the last Meeting of States Parties, the goal articulated at the Maputo Review Conference - to complete the work of the Convention by 2025 - is a call to action.

It should not be interpreted as an indication that our work is nearly done. Only through the increased and dedicated commitment of all States Parties will we end the scourge of anti-personnel mines.

The urgency of this work is underscored by the data provided by the International Campaign to Ban Landmines of a decade-high number of casualties, at a time when support for mine action fell to its lowest levels in 10 years. This includes a staggering 75% increase in the number of casualties when compared with 2014. Universalization has been moving at a slow pace.

As our Minister of Foreign Affairs recently stated, the Convention is a testament to what can be achieved when political leadership is combined with the dedication of our best diplomats and the talents and reach of the NGO community.

We must use that same spirit and build greater momentum in working together to achieve the goal of a world free of anti-personnel mines by 2025.

Canada is very proud to be part of the Global Demining Initiative for Colombia. This model of commitment by states to work together for completion produced great success. We should look for more opportunities to build such partnerships in the future.

Canada stands ready to contribute to the effort of convincing those countries who still have not signed the Convention to do so, and take part in a campaign to work with them to join a Convention that has already shown its benefits for humanity.

Canada intends to mark the 20th anniversary of the signature of the Convention which offers us all an opportunity to renew public attention to this important Treaty. While we have come a long way in 20 years, there is still more to be done.

We congratulate Chile on their initiative to host a panel on gender and mine action.

As we work toward eliminating anti-personnel mines, gender analysis and the use of gender disaggregated data are essential to maximizing the effectiveness of interventions and ensuring that all members of communities receive adequate care and benefit, along with opportunities to work as agents of change.

In societies with entrenched gender roles, the loss or incapacity of a spouse or male family member can result in stigmatization for the families of these victims. Women may face discrimination entering the workforce to provide for their families or retaining the titles to their land or custody of their children if their husband is killed.

In addition, in such societies, loss of mobility can be particularly challenging as it can be a source of social stigma and psychological trauma for surviving men and boys. Women and girls who survive landmine explosions often face multiple barriers to recovery and integration, meaning that they may require a number of specific economic, social, and rehabilitative services.

Mine survey teams usually consist mostly or entirely of men. However, integrated or all-women teams can facilitate information sharing in different social contexts. This will ensure more complete non-technical survey results, which can aid in risk assessment, clearance prioritization, and mine risk education interventions. In addition, including women, who are direct or indirect victims of mines, can also provide them with economic opportunities.

In Canada, all mine action related projects are assessed with regards to their level of gender integration, and the extent to which they support implementation of Canada's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.

This year, Canada is undertaking a comprehensive international assistance review. The assessment applies a feminist lens overall, and it also has a thematic priority to support women and girls. The results of this review will be announced in 2017.

In closing our general remarks, we encourage all States Parties to join us in the ambitious pursuit of achieving the 2025 goal. We will only succeed on the strength of our collective effort.