

**Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction**

**16<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States-Parties  
Vienna, Austria**

**Remarks by Ireland on Universalisation**

Mr President,

Ireland aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union.

As of the end of 2017, the Ottawa Convention has 163 States Parties - representing circa 80% of the world's States - placing it amongst the most universal disarmament instrument. Ireland welcomes the recent decision by Sri Lanka to accede to the Convention.

This is a number we can all be proud of. The ICBL has labelled the Mine Ban Convention 'a success in progress' and our challenge is to keep that progress going by continuing steadfast efforts to ensure universal adherence to the Convention.

While this progress is welcome, we cannot ignore the fact that a number of States including some major possessors and producers of anti-personnel landmines remain outside the Convention. As of 2017, 34 States remain outside of the scope of the Convention.

As long as States remain outside of the Convention and continue to produce new anti-personnel mines, to retain large stockpiles, or to reserve the right to use them, these mines will remain a persistent humanitarian problem. Indeed, when any State remains outside the anti-personnel mine ban norm, their absence can be used by others, whether they be States or insurgent groups, to justify the continued use of anti-personnel mines.

Ireland takes this opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to promoting universalisation of the Anti-Personnel Landmine Convention and promoting adherence to its norms, so we can welcome those last remaining States to the 'Ottawa Community'. Ireland continues to support this aim through the fulfilment of the Maputo Action Plan, which calls for continuing efforts to pursue universal adherence and acceptance of the Convention's norms.

We are all firmly committed to the establishment of the Convention as an international human rights and international humanitarian law norm. Ireland continues to take every opportunity to encourage States not party to the convention to accede to it.

We have used and will continue to use our network of Embassies and close relations with a number of States, including in Africa, Europe, and Southeast Asia to promote the Convention, even where the signals have been disappointing to date. We regularly raise it in the context of high level bilateral meetings.

We have also used multilateral opportunities, and military to military contact, to open and maintain dialogue on universalisation and we will continue to do so as part of our efforts to achieve universalisation of the Convention.

Thank you, Mr. President

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