



Panel Discussion

“20 Years of Successes: Fulfilling the Promise of the Convention by 2025”

Monday, 18 December 2017, 15:00

Concept Note

Background

More than two decades ago, the movement to deal with the devastating effects of anti-personnel landmines was born. Organizations witnessing the humanitarian harm of anti-personnel mines around the globe brought the scourge of mines to the world’s attention. Through an unprecedented partnership between States and civil society organizations, efforts to ban anti-personnel mines were accelerated.

The conference of like-minded countries held in October 1996 in Ottawa marked the start of the “Ottawa Process” when, at the conclusion of the Conference, Canada’s then Foreign Minister, Lloyd Axworthy, invited States to return to Ottawa in December 1997 to sign a treaty banning the production, export and use of anti-personnel landmines. Axworthy challenged the governments to “put our rhetoric into action.” Within 14 months, the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention was drafted, negotiated, adopted and signed.

The adoption and signature of the Convention was a great advancement in strengthening the safety and security of civilians. The Convention has become a global success story, a trail-blazer for humanitarian disarmament. Its achievements have positively impacted thousands of people’s lives around the globe with 162 States Parties to the Convention, representing more than 80% of the world’s countries; more than 51 million landmines destroyed; 30 States Parties declaring having completed their mine clearance obligations under the Convention; and formerly mined areas returned to safe and productive human use. Notwithstanding the successes, challenges remain to be addressed.

Focus and objectives

The panel will look back to the achievements of the past 20 years and their sources, including strong partnership between governments and civil society, political will and cooperation and assistance. Based on our experience of the past decades this panel will further look into identifying and addressing the remaining challenges in order to meet our shared aspiration to fulfil by 2025, to the furthest extent possible, the key promises of the Convention, among them no more new victims in areas under States Parties’ jurisdiction or control and participation of survivors in their societies on an equal basis as well as implementation of time bound obligations.

The panel discussion will look at:

- The humanitarian impact of anti-personnel mines at the time and efforts to generate political will by governments and civil society to arrive at a comprehensive agreement to ban anti-personnel mines;
- The contribution of the Convention to International Humanitarian Law, the progress made by the treaty, lessons we have learned and remaining challenges;
- The relevance of the treaty in today's world in light of the use of anti-personnel mines in current protracted conflicts, significant remaining contamination to be addressed and the number of States that remain outside the treaty.

Speakers and panellists

Moderation: **H.E. Thomas Hajnoczi**, Ambassador of Austria

Panel:

- Mrs. Jodi Williams, Nobel Laureate
- H.E. Steffen Kongstad - Permanent Representative, Permanent Delegation of Norway to the OSCE
- Ms. Jill Sinclair, Executive Director, External Engagement and Partnerships, Canadian Defence Academy of the Department of National Defence
- H.E. Pedro Comissário Afonso, Ambassador of Mozambique to the United Nations in Geneva
- Ms. Margaret Arach Orech, ICBL Ambassador

Format

The panel will be held in an interactive format, with no presentation other than the opening statement, which will lay the ground for discussion and define the scope of the theme. The facilitator will begin the discussions by asking a different question to each panellist. Each panellist will have the opportunity to offer any insight into the matter. This will be followed by comments and questions from States Parties and other participants.

States Parties are encouraged to participate, refraining from providing formal statements.