



PHILIPPINES

**19th Meeting of States Parties to the
Anti-Personnel Land Mine Convention
13-17 December 2021**

Agenda 10 (f): Universalizing the Convention

STATEMENT

H.E. J. Eduardo Malaya, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Head of the Philippine Delegation to the 19th Meeting of States Parties

Mr. President,

Universalization of this Convention and the norms that it promotes remains an aspiration for States Parties to this Convention and to all members of affected communities in many countries – whether they be States Parties or not.

We harken back to Paragraph 7 and Action 12 of the Oslo Action Plan, which recalls the establishment of strong norms against landmines, and commits States Parties to promote universal observance not only of the Convention's legal provisions, but also its norms and objectives.

Universalization therefore means more than just encouraging more states to accede to the Convention. It also means strengthening the norms against any use of landmines.

This point is relevant given that some actors continue to use landmines and cause humanitarian suffering and harm, and then obfuscate their crimes by employing legalistic semantics.

In the Philippines, the terrorist New People's Army continue to deploy improvised explosive devices (IEDs) functioning as mines. Its leadership justifies this by falsely asserting that "landmines are the poor man's weapon."

When called out for violation of International Humanitarian Law – which they have declared themselves adherents of – the same terrorist leadership falsely claims that their deployment of landmines is legal because they are outside the scope of the definition of anti-personnel landmines under this Convention.

No amount of legalistic obfuscation should distract us from upholding the ultimate goal of our universalization efforts: The affirmation of the resounding rejection by global public conscience of any use landmines against civilians and civilian communities.

In accordance with Action 12 of the Oslo Action Plan, therefore, we call on States Parties to condemn the use of any landmines by any actor, including armed non-state actors that deploy improvised explosive devices that act as mines.

Thank you, Mister President.