

## 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention

**Geneva, 1 March 2014:** On 1st March 1999 in Ottawa, 122 States renounced anti-personnel mines – deadly weapons that were claiming over 20,000 victims every year. Exactly 15 years and 161 State ratifications later, we have good reasons to celebrate the anniversary of the Anti-Personnel Mine-Ban Convention (APMBC)<sup>1</sup>. The adoption of the Convention coincided with the multiplication of mine action programmes around the world. During the 1990s, an increasing number of mine-affected countries established national structures to address the problem of anti-personnel mines. Since then, lessons have been learnt, clearance methods improved and standards and tools developed; as a result, casualties have been drastically reduced.

The GICHD, which has itself just celebrated its 15 years of existence, is a witness to this great progress and remains committed to protecting civilians from explosive weapons. We are proud to host the Implementation Support Unit of the Convention, which supports States Parties in the implementation of their obligations.

Despite impressive developments, many challenges remain and weapons and explosive remnants of war continue to kill civilians every day. Anti-vehicle mines are an example of this challenge and in some countries are the cause of more deaths than anti-personnel mines. The GICHD is taking an active part in the ongoing discussions by supporting research and providing evidence of the humanitarian impact posed by these weapons.

The APMBC's Third Review Conference, taking place from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> June this year in Maputo, Mozambique, will assess the progress made to date and provide a roadmap for the work ahead. Mozambique, a heavily mine-affected country, has effectively dealt with landmine contamination and is expected to be mine-free in 2014.

More about the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention: [www.apminebanconvention.org](http://www.apminebanconvention.org)

---

### About the GICHD

The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) is an international expert organisation based in Switzerland that works to eliminate mines, explosive remnants of war and other explosive hazards. By undertaking research, developing standards and disseminating knowledge, the GICHD supports capacity development in mine-affected countries. It works with national and local authorities to help them plan, coordinate, implement, monitor and evaluate mine action programmes. The GICHD also contributes to the implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, the Convention on Cluster Munitions and other relevant instruments of international law. The GICHD follows the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence.

**For more information:** Christine Spring, Communication Manager, [c.spring@gichd.org](mailto:c.spring@gichd.org)

---

<sup>1</sup>Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. Also referred to as Mine Ban Treaty, or Ottawa Convention