

# Press Release



## Landmine treaty marks its seventeenth birthday with a call for further action to eradicate anti-personnel mines and to assist landmine survivors

Geneva 18 September 2014 – The Mozambican Presidency of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, or *Ottawa Convention*, has marked seventeen years since the adoption of this landmark treaty by recalling tremendous progress that has been achieved and appealing for stepped-up action to complete the task of ending the suffering caused by anti-personnel mines.

“We are both, proud of seventeen years’ worth of accomplishments and mindful of what work remains,” said Ambassador Pedro Comissario, Permanent Representative of Mozambique to the United Nations (Geneva). “This was well documented when the international community gathered at a high level in June of this year at the Convention’s *Maputo Review Conference*.”

- “There are now 162 States that are bound by this Convention and even wider agreement that the use of anti-personnel mines is unacceptable,” said Ambassador Comissario. “However, as not all States are yet on board and as some still continue to use landmines, we must spare no effort to continue promoting universal adherence to the Convention and observance of its norms.”
- “When the Convention was adopted, the clearance of all mined areas was a distant prospect and perhaps, to some, unachievable. Today, 29 States have completed this effort, which proves completion of our mine clearance obligations is within reach,” said Ambassador Comissario. “However, we remain deeply concerned that emplaced mines still continue to cause death and suffering around the world. Our efforts to demine must continue in an expedient manner.”
- “The adoption of this Convention set a precedent by becoming the first multilateral arms control or disarmament treaty to make provisions for the victims of a particular weapon system,” said Ambassador Comissario. “Certainly the Convention has made a difference but obviously much more is required to ensure that landmine victims may become survivors who are able to participate in all spheres of their societies on a basis equal to others.”

“The sense of optimism prevalent when the Convention was adopted in Oslo, Norway 17 years ago has been matched by the reality that ending the era of anti-personnel mines is indeed possible,” said Ambassador Comissario.

“As our work is not yet done, at the *Maputo Review Conference* we affirmed our ambition to ensure that there are no new mine victims in areas under our jurisdiction or control, to see that survivors participate in their societies on an equal basis to others, and to intensify our efforts to complete our respective time-bound obligations with the urgency that the completion work requires,” added Ambassador Comissario. “In this connection, we expressed our aspiration to meet these goals to the fullest extent possible by 2025.”

Since the *Maputo Review Conference*, the Convention’s States Parties have begun implementing their *Maputo Action Plan*, which aims for significant and sustainable progress towards this ambition during the period 2014 to 2019.

Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Implementation Support Unit

Ambassador Pedro Comissario will continue to lead Geneva-based efforts to implement the *Maputo Action Plan* until the end of 2014, at which time Belgium's Permanent Representative to the United Nations (Geneva), Ambassador Bertrand de Crombrughe will take over as the Convention's President.

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For press information, contact: Laila Rodriguez +41 (0) 22 730 93 50, [press@apminebanconvention.org](mailto:press@apminebanconvention.org). Find the Convention on the [web](#), [Facebook](#), [Flickr](#) or [Twitter](#).