

**Standing Committee on the General Status and Operation of the Convention
Canadian Statement – Universalization
20 June, 2011**

Thank-you Mr. Co-Chair

As we are all aware, it has now been three and a half years since the Minister of State of Palau deposited Palau's instrument of accession at the 8th Meeting of States Parties held on the shores of the Dead Sea. From that time to this, there have been no further accessions or ratifications. That said there are clearly some positive signs that our Convention will continue to grow. We are hopeful that the United States review of their anti-personnel mine policy will once again gain momentum and remain hopeful that they and other states will decide to join the Convention in the near future. Finland would appear to be targeting completion of its accession process in 2011 and we would certainly encourage the deposit of their instrument of accession in Phnom Penh at the 11th Meeting of States Parties. We also have had continuing assurance that Poland will join us in 2012, perhaps early in that year. Additionally we have had generally positive responses from several other states, including Bahrain, Lao PDR, Mongolia and Nepal.

Canada also continues to welcome the strong and dedicated efforts of the Special Envoy on Universalization, and the determination of our President to fulfill his role regarding universalization. We believe that the high level team of His Royal Highness and our President is an extremely potent force for universalization.

At the last meeting of the Universalization Contact Group discussion centered on the need to encourage all states parties to take an active role in the universalization of our Convention. We also agreed that such efforts should be made at the highest possible levels but should also continue to be made at the official's level. As many have said, time and again, full universalization must be our goal if we are to finally rid the world of this weapon of terror.

Mr. Co-Chair, Canada has filled the role of Coordinator of the Universalization Contact Group for more than a decade and we feel with some notable successes. But it is now time to turn that responsibility over to another, who we are convinced, will bring fresh energy, new ideas and strong leadership to the Group. Mr. Co-Chair, Belgium, which as you should recall was one of the original leaders in the efforts to bring this treaty to fruition, has agreed to take on this demanding role. Of course, Canada will continue to participate in the work of the Universalization Contact Group under Belgium's leadership. Mr. Co-Chair, I would like to congratulate Belgium on its decision and with your agreement, turn the floor over to our new Coordinator.

Thank You