

***Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (Mine Ban Treaty)***

**Standing Committee on the General Status and Operation of the Convention**

**Statement by Finland**

Geneva, 20 June 2011

- Finland participates in this meeting as an observer, as it is not yet party to the Convention. This notwithstanding, we have consistently promoted the Convention's universalisation and its humanitarian objectives:
  - ✓ Finland voted in favour of the resolution on the implementation of the Convention at the United Nations General Assembly in December.
  - ✓ Finland has also supported humanitarian mine action in a number of countries for several years. They include Afghanistan, Angola, Cambodia, Chad, Ethiopia, Iraq and Somalia.
  - ✓ For us, mine detection and clearance, assistance for the care, rehabilitation and social and economic integration of mine victims as well as support to mine awareness projects are mutually complementary.
- Anti-personnel mines cost lives, cause injuries and hinder development around the world long after conflicts have receded. The Ottawa Convention banning their use, stockpiling, production and transfer is the key instrument for addressing these issues and preventing them from reoccurring.
- Although most countries have now banned anti-personnel mines, the universalisation of the Ottawa Convention continues to be work in progress. It is exactly in this context that I have asked to take the floor this morning.
- Finland has, a number of years ago, pledged to join the Ottawa Convention in 2012 and, consequently, destroy all its existing stockpiles of anti-personnel mines by the end of 2016. We are committed to these timelines. I would like to emphasize that there are no minefields in Finland, nor do we produce or export anti-personnel mines.
- The national constitutional measures required for the accession to the Convention are under way. The Government Bill to Parliament has been finalized, and the proposal will be submitted to Parliament promptly after the summer break in order for the Convention to be ratified in 2012.