

# **STATEMENT BY SOUTH AFRICA DURING THE MEETINGS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE AP MINE BAN CONVENTION, 21-25 MAY 2012**

## **GENERAL STATUS AND OPERATION OF THE CONVENTION**

### **UNIVERSALISATION**

Thank you, Co-Chairs,

Let me begin by thanking Norway and Peru, for their work on this important matter and to assure you of my delegation's fullest support.

The AP Mine Ban Convention has established a norm in the field of disarmament and international humanitarian law (IHL) since its entry into force. This is evident in the fact that there are a decreasing number of countries that have been reported to be involved in the production of mines. Secondly, it is indeed encouraging that there has been no need for States Parties to invoke the treaty's formal compliance provisions to clarify any compliance matters. Thirdly, progress has been made through the destruction of millions of stockpiled mines. Furthermore, more victims are benefiting from the victim assistance programmes in the form of medical care, education, training, physical rehabilitation, social services and employment.

Co-Chairs,

Despite the significant progress that has been achieved, there are still a number of challenges that lie ahead of us. In this regard, my country is concerned about the lack of further progress towards the universalisation of the Convention. While we are satisfied that a growing number of States are generally adhering to the norms established by the Convention, we remain particularly concerned about a number of States that continue to hold significant stockpiles of anti-personnel mines and have yet to join the Convention. Universalisation should therefore remain one of our priorities.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Universalisation contact group for its good work and the President's High Level envoy on Universalisation, His Royal Highness, Prince Mired Raad Al Hussein of Jordan for his excellent work and tireless efforts in consulting the non-States Parties with a view to convincing them to join the Convention. In this connection, we would like to congratulate and welcome the recent accession of Finland. My delegation would like to assure the delegation of Finland of our full support and cooperation. We are encouraged by positive recent announcements of non-States Parties such as Somalia, Poland and others of their intention to join the Convention. We are looking forward to welcoming them in the near future

I thank you.