

**Statement**  
**of the First deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic**  
**Mr. Talantbek Kushtchubekov at the Standing Committee Meetings on**  
**implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling,**  
**Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and Their Destruction**

February, 9-13, 2003, Geneva

Madame, Mister Co-Chairs!  
Distinguished delegates!  
Ladies and Gentlemen!

First, I would like to express my gratitude to the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining for the invitation to take part in such important event.

I am confident, that our Meetings will certainly contribute to enhancing the international community's efforts on maintenance of strategic stability, first of all through strengthening of multilateral mechanisms in the field of global and regional security and disarmament.

Dear participants,

Among other international documents on non-proliferation and prohibition of weapons the Antipersonnel Mines Ban Convention is not less important also.

We agree that for their quantity and threat they represent, the antipersonnel mines are a problem of primary importance. Today the international community including the countries of the Central Asia, are realising gravity of this problem.

We welcome the fact that from the moment of signing in 1997 of the Antipersonnel Mines Ban Convention up today 141 states have acceded it.

I would like to note, that for the purposes of full liquidation of mine threat in the Central Asia it is necessary not only regional efforts, but efforts of all international community. In this respect we welcome proceeding since 2003 to reduction of use of the antipersonnel mines all over the world and increasing of the donor countries and the international organisations assistance for demining.

Dear colleagues,

As you are aware, for today Kyrgyzstan is not the State Party of the Mine Ban Convention. It is known, that more than 80 percent of the country's borders are at high altitude, about 3000-4000 m., with remote and difficult-to-access paths – locations where it would not be possible to station forces or border guards.

Antipersonnel mines are viewed as a cheap and available weapon, while the acquisition of alternatives is seen as economically impossible.

We are supporting the idea of full prohibition of the antipersonnel mines, but at the same time we are for the phased and step-by-step progressing to this goal.

We express readiness to work actively with interested states and international organisations, including the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, in the field of reduction of quantity of the antipersonnel mines, demining divisions training and their appropriate equipping.

Meantime, I would like to state, that Kyrgyzstan has never produced or exported antipersonnel mines, but inherited a stockpile of mines from the Soviet Union.

The good example of co-operation of Kyrgyzstan with international organisations on antipersonnel mines problem has been the “Antipersonnel mines in Central Asian and CIS countries” international conference, held in Bishkek in November 2003 in co-operation with the International Campaign to Ban Landmines and the “International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War” Kyrgyz Committee.

Dear participants,

Today the demining problems in Kyrgyzstan should be considered in a framework of the borders demarcation and delimitation issues with the neighbour states. Unfortunately, we should state that boundary issues with some neighbour states still remain not settled definitively.

It is well-known that the settlement of boundary problems is the complex enough process but ensures the security and stability in Fergana Valley where three states - Kyrgyzstan, Tadjikistan and Uzbekistan are bordering.

It is necessary to note, that today there is no direct threat of infiltration of the international rebels on the territory of these countries. Military-political situation in the region is radically changing in the positive way, as a result of close co-operation of the countries of region and antiterrorist coalition in ensuring security and stability.

In this regard Kyrgyzstan is particularly concerned for still remaining mined sites of border areas with Republic of Uzbekistan.

This fact is recognised not only by Kyrgyzstan. Accordingly to the ICBL “Landmine Monitor report 2003”, Republic of Uzbekistan laid antipersonnel mines on the border with Kyrgyzstan. Uzbek minefields are emplaced inside Kyrgyzsan around the enclaves of Sokh and Shakhi-Mardan, and along other border areas.

The estimated width of the mined areas around these enclaves is at not less 250 meters, with high mining density, from 2000 to 3000 mines per kilometre.

Monthly about two-three explosions on border areas are registered. There are victims among the population, including the homicides, that are of grave concern.

The steps undertaken by the Kyrgyz party for demining "disputable sites" of the Kyrgyz-Uzbek border have not led to the positive resolving of this problem, since the Uzbek party has replanted mines again in that areas.

Meantime, taking into consideration the danger represented with the mined areas on the Kyrgyz-Uzbek border, Kyrgyzstan authorities with support from NGOs and the ICRC conducts appropriate information activities, such as mine risk education program for the population in border areas of Kyrgyzstan and places warning signs in mine-affected areas.

It is necessary to note that such circumstances discourage development of co-operation in all areas, including extension of the trade and economic relations.

Dear participants,

I am deeply confident that authority of the international organisations and representatives of the donor countries participating at these meetings is rather high. Their assistance could be directed to encouragement of co-operation of the Central Asian States in establishing and maintaining of the trust regime in border areas, to development of close co-operation at regional and inter-regional levels for ensuring the well-being and prosperity of the countries of region.

I would like to emphasise once again, that the world without mines remains our common goal. As it was noted, the way to its achievement should be realistic, stage-by-stage, providing maintenance of a necessary level of stability.

Thank you for attention!