

**Statement by Turkey on “armed non-state actors”
at the Ottawa Treaty Intercessional Meeting**

17 June 2005

Distinguished Co-Chairs,
Delegates

My delegation requested the floor under this agenda item to touch on the issue of the use of landmines by “armed non-state actors”. Although Turkey’s views on this particular issue have been clearly laid out, including in Bangkok, Nairobi and other meetings in Geneva, we feel the need to underscore certain aspects related to it.

Before moving on, my delegation would like to highlight an important distinction. The Ottawa Treaty to which Turkey became a State Party on the 1st of March 2004 is a *legally* binding document. The Nairobi Plan of Action 2005-2009, adopted during the First Review Conference of the Treaty is a document of politically binding nature.

Turning now to Action 46 of the Nairobi Plan, this Action reads:

“States in a position to do so will...continue to support, *as appropriate*, mine action to assist populations in areas under the control of armed non-state actors, particularly in areas under the control of actors which have agreed to abide by the Conventions norms.”

“Armed non-state actors” differ from one another. Some terrorist organisations try to use this blanket cover of “armed non-state actors” for their evil intentions and deeds. Therefore, it is only natural for States to have varying levels of sensitivity towards engagements with them. In addition, whether or not engagements with such groups grant them recognition, legal and political status is still an open and fundamental question. It is clear that there is no “one size fits all” solution to this.

As far as it is concerned, Turkey interprets and accepts the phrase “as appropriate” to mean that States concerned must be informed of any potential engagements with “armed non state actors” and the intended nature of these engagements. Furthermore, Turkey accepts this phrase to mean that the views of States concerned must be heeded. In other words, if a State Party does not give its consent to such an engagement, any such plan should not be implemented.

We would like to point out that we are aware of certain efforts, regarding Turkey yet against Turkey’s wishes. Suffice to say that Turkey is strongly against these engagements and always has been.

Thank you Co-Chairs.