



Republic of the Philippines

Statement before the Ottawa Treaty Standing Committee
on the General Status and Operation of the Convention
Geneva, 6 June 2008

The Philippine Delegation wishes to express its appreciation and congratulations to the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for its successful hosting of the 8th Meeting of Ottawa Treaty States Parties last year, and to the Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Demining for its continuing support to the Mine Ban Treaty's Meetings of Standing Committees. Our Delegation also wishes to thank Germany and Kenya for their able Co-Chairmanship of the past week's Meetings on the General Status and Operation of the Convention, and the Co-Chairmen of our other Meetings as well for their fine work.

We would like to take this opportunity to assure fellow delegates and the Mine Ban Community as a whole that the Philippines, while not being a possessor or user of landmines, recognizes and honors its commitments under the Ottawa Treaty. We will in due course update our reporting as per Article 7 of the Treaty, and will continue to work closely with our legislators in passing national legislation implementing the Treaty in the Philippines.

Our delegation would like to commend the tireless and invaluable work of the International and Philippine Mine Ban Civil Society Community in advancing Treaty goals. The Philippines views progress made in the Mine Ban arena as an important element of the global disarmament, humanitarian and development agendas, with inherent complementarities with the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development and the recently-concluded draft Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM). The Philippines looks forward to the future development of a inter-treaty regime interface mechanism between the Ottawa Treaty, the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and the CCM.

The Philippine Delegation would also like to highlight an important dividend of our work, namely engagement with Non-State Actors and Armed Groups (NSAs / NSAGs). A new and significant initiative is the development of a new instrument for NSAGs, namely the "Rebel Group Declaration of Adherence to the International Humanitarian Law (IHL) on Landmines" which has already been signed by three Philippine communist rebel groups. Developed by the Philippine Campaign to Ban Landmines (PCBL), the new Declaration expands the scope of past commitments to encompass four major IHL sources, namely (a) the 1997 Ottawa Treaty, (b) the 1996 CCW Amended Protocol II on Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices, (c) the 2003 CCW Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) and (d) the 2005 International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Study on Customary IHL Rules on Landmines.

The Philippine Delegation wishes to applaud the progress made thus far in our global campaign, but also recognizes that we all need to continue to exert even more vigorous effort to realize our dream of a world free from the evil of landmines.