

STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE OTTAWA CONVENTION**INTERVENTION OF THE ARGENTINE DELEGATION****27th May 2009**

Dear Co-Chair,

As it was announced by my Government during the 9th MSP last November, on 27th April Argentina submitted its extension request for 10 years according to Article 5 of the Convention, related to the mined areas in the Malvinas Islands, only area of the Argentine territory affected by this type of weapons.

The reasons for this request are contained in the Interpretative Declaration made by my country at the time of the ratification of the Ottawa Convention on 14th September 1999, which reflects the special and particular colonial situation under which are the Malvinas Islands due to the illegitimate occupation by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Taking into consideration this illegitimate occupation, the performance of humanitarian mine clearance works on the part of the Argentine Republic depends upon the United Kingdom's effective compliance of what has been established by the relevant resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly and Special Committee on Decolonization on the "Question of the Malvinas Islands", which recognize the existence of a sovereignty dispute between both countries over the Malvinas, South Georgias and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas.

In order to contribute to create the favorable conditions for resuming the sovereignty negotiations urged by the international community, the Argentine Republic has adopted a series of provisional understandings under sovereignty formula with the United Kingdom on practical aspects related to the area of its national territory under illegitimate British occupation.

Among those provisory understandings and with that spirit, I would like to highlight the Agreements by Exchange of Notes under sovereignty formula signed in Buenos Aires on 11 October 2001 and 3 August 2006 for the carrying out of a feasibility study on the clearance of anti-personnel mines (including UXOs) on the Malvinas Islands. Both countries have kept the United Nations and the Ottawa Convention informed about the contents and implementation thereof.

In the framework of these Agreements by Exchange of Notes, the Joint Working Party made up of delegations of both countries, held seventeen meetings between December 2001 and October 2007, and experts from Cranfield University monitored by military officers of both countries performed a field survey on the Malvinas Islands during December 2006.

On 5 October 2007, the Argentine and the British Governments exchanged notes approving the work performed by the Joint Working Party, including the Final Report on the Feasibility Study on Mine Clearance (including UXOs) on the Malvinas Islands. The most relevant aspects of the Agreements by Exchange of Notes referred to above were thus fulfilled.

The Final Report was submitted by Argentina at the 8th Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention held in Jordan between 18 and 22 November 2007 and is an integral part of the request for extension submitted by Argentina.

Finally, the Argentine delegation is available to continue exchanging with State Parties, and in particular, through the analyzing group, in order to contribute to the favorable consideration of the request at the II Review Conference next December.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.