

(Check against delivery)

**The Tenth Meeting of States Parties
to the Convention on the Use, Stockpiling, Production,
Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction**

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Akio Suda
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Japan
to the Conference on Disarmament**

Geneva, 2 December 2010

Universalizing the Convention

Mr. President,

My delegation is grateful to you, Mr. President, for your intensive preparatory work and excellent conduct of the Meeting of the States Parties. I would also like to express our gratitude to His Royal Highness Prince Mired Raad Al-Hussein of Jordan, the President's Special Envoy on Universalization, for being here with us today.

Mr. President,

The Mine Ban Convention sets up a strict norm for banning the inhuman weapon and has been contributing to the strengthening of international humanitarian law. The total number of States Parties to the Convention, 156, presents its unequivocal role as a driving force for protecting the lives of people from landmines.

Universal adherence to the Convention is essential for achieving the objective under the Convention to realize a mine-free world and no victims of landmines. It is regrettable, therefore, to say that there has been no new state joining the Convention since November 2007 when Palau announced its accession. We are facing the challenge, how to expand the membership and how to encourage non-states parties to adhere to the norms of the Mine Ban.

We were extremely disturbed to read in the most recent Geneva Progress Report that there have been new cases of anti-personnel mine use in some parts of the world even after the Cartagena Summit. I would like to recall that it was at Cartagena where we all agreed to condemn and continue to discourage in every possible way any production, transfer and, above all, use of anti-personnel mines by any actor. This means that our endeavors for realizing universal adherence to the Convention and its norms are still far from over.

Mr. President,

Japan has been engaged in universalization efforts since the Convention's birth. Unfortunately, the Asia-Pacific region has the largest number of non-states parties. Since the 1st Review Conference in 2004, the Government of Japan has been making appeals to the region's 16 non-states parties to ratify or at least to adhere to the Convention's norms through bilateral consultations and demarches. Last year alone we approached all the non-states parties in the region. Last April, Japan joined His Royal Highness Prince Mired of Jordan, in his meeting with government officials from Lao PDR to encourage Lao PDR, who is a leader on the issue of cluster munitions, to become a state party to the Mine Ban Convention. Japan will continue to cooperate with His Royal Highness towards realizing the universality.

In our discussions with government officials of non-states parties, a number of persistent concerns were voiced as factors preventing their countries from joining the Mine Ban Convention. These concerns centered on issues like regional instability, the presence of armed non-state actors, internal political situations, etc. They are a complex of problems which vary from country to country. That is why really enduring efforts are needed in our universalization work. And the central message we should tirelessly carry on is, of course, the humanitarian concern of human beings. In doing so, we should give due consideration to particular situations of respective countries, and try to help their efforts to address issues relevant to land-mines through specific and practical projects.

Mr. President,

Japan is also serving as the Friend of the Chair on Universalization to the Convention on Cluster Munitions. It has been engaged in outreach activities in cooperation with other state parties, international organizations, the ICRC, and many NGOs. We can promote their common objectives of the two countries to address humanitarian problems and develop potential synergies in implementation and cooperation in relation to the two instruments. In this respect, I believe, it is highly recommendable that effective regional organizations, say for instance ASEAN, would take up humanitarian problems of landmines and cluster munitions as its agenda for discussions. Such a step by a regional body could help all the states in the region, either state parties or non-state parties, cooperate with each other in realizing a safer condition in the region.

Mr. President,

Promoting universality has real effects to the world. Japan is committed to its continued efforts in universalization, particularly making the Asia Pacific not remain the region of lowest membership. And finally, I would like to take this opportunity to ask those observer states to step up their engagement in our joint efforts to put an end to humanitarian problems being caused by anti-personnel mines.

I thank you.