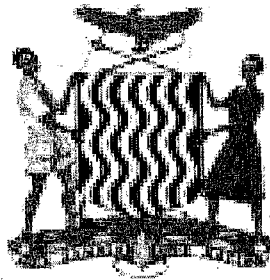


PM



**ZAMBIA'S STATEMENT ON GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS
DURING THE 12TH MEETING OF STATE PARTIES TO THE ANTI-
PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION.**

Mr. President,

On behalf of the Zambian delegation, allow me from the outset, to extend my congratulations to you on your election as President of the 12th Meeting of State Parties. We can rest assure you of Zambia's support during your tenure of office. I also wish to congratulate other members of the Bureau. Allow me also pay tribute to the past President, Cambodia, for diligently steering the works of the convention for the last one year.

I would also like to extend warm congratulations to Finland, Poland and Somalia for joining the Convention. This is an important step towards the achievement of universalization. To this end, Zambia welcomes you all.

Mr. President,

Zambia welcomes the significant progress made, since the 11MSP in the fight against the suffering caused by anti personnel mines. These indiscriminate and long lasting weapons continue to kill and maim innocent members of communities and constitute an obstacle to both social and economic development as well as to the restoration of normal social conditions and have a lasting effect on mine affected communities.

In the pursuit to put an end to the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel mines, Zambia is encouraged to note that there are now 160 State Parties that have ratified or acceded to the convention. In the spirit of fulfilling the Cartagena Plan of Action towards ratification and accession to the convention, Zambia wishes to appeal to those countries that have not ratified or acceded to the convention to do so as soon as possible. In this connection, we consider that international cooperation is important not only in the implementation but also in efforts leading to universalization of the convention.

With regard to mine clearance, Zambia notes that the success of the convention lies in implementation of Article 5 and, therefore, urges States Parties to be committed to their obligations and endeavour to meet their deadlines and reduce on extension requests.

Zambia is, however, concerned about the continued usage of anti-personnel mines by some countries, causing further suffering to innocent lives, which defeats the purpose of international efforts to ban the use of anti-personnel mines. Zambia, therefore, condemns this continued usage of anti-personnel mines and calls for immediate review of such actions by countries concerned in order to save lives.

On victim assistance, we note the efforts by various State Parties and other stake holders in ensuring that necessary data is available for developing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating national policies and plans. We are aware, however, that the success of data collection is in many instances hindered by lack of resources and capacity especially among developing countries. This, therefore, calls for concerted efforts in enhancing international cooperation and assistance.

Mr. President,

Zambia wishes to reaffirm its readiness and commitment to work together with all States Parties in order to ensure a mine free world.

I thank you.