

## **Statement by the Czech Republic**

### **Fourteenth Meeting of the State Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction**

**Geneva, 30 November – 4 December 2015**

Mr President, let me congratulate you on your election.

The Czech Republic aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union. For my part, I would like to start by strong appreciation of Special Envoys (*Prince Mired Raad Z. Al-Husseini of Jordan, Princess Astrid of Belgium and the famous Colombian singer/artist Juhannes*) and other stakeholders that have taken leadership in universalization efforts. We support all steps leading to universalization of the Convention. Only zero antipersonnel landmines will lead us to zero victims.

We could easily imagine more progress in several areas of implementing the Ottawa Convention, but we still consider the Convention so far a clear success. The Convention provides an indispensable framework aiming at the goal of total eradication of antipersonnel mines, of suffering and of loss of lives that are consequence to the use and existence of this weapon. Thanks to the efforts of States Parties as well as of non-governmental organizations, millions of mines have been destroyed world-wide, production and trade in mines is dropping, destruction of stockpiles of antipersonnel landmines in many States Parties has been completed, and most importantly – the number of victims is decreasing.

In this context, the Czech Republic highly appreciates the efforts of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian De-mining, the International Trust Fund for Demining and Mine Victims Assistance, the United Nations Mines Action Service, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines and the International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent aimed at international coordination, resulting in destroying of more than 47 millions landmines and in clearing more than 2000km<sup>2</sup> of mined areas.

Mr. President,

the Czech Republic is ready to continue to share its expertise and technologies with others in a spirit of co-operation to facilitate compliance by States Parties. Also, we give special prominence to the reporting according to Article 7 of the Convention, a measure that significantly helps to raise transparency of the Ottawa process.

The Czech Republic can demonstrate its commitment to the goals of the Ottawa convention also by regular and significant voluntary contributions to mine actions. Last year we supported the Trust Fund for Demining and Mine Victims Assistance (ITF) with 14.500 EUR to be used in projects in Bosnia and Herzegovina, we contributed 4.500 CHF to the Anti-Personnel Landmines Convention Secretariat (ISU) on the implementation and universalisation activities of the Convention, 84.000 EUR were provided through NATO Explosive Ordnance Disposal project to Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, 45.400 EUR to Georgia and 20.000 EUR through NATO Trust Fund to Serbia. Furthermore, during the past years, the Czech Armed Forces have been involved in various Mine Action activities in Afghanistan, and despite budgetary pressure, other Mine Action activities are being envisaged to be started possibly next year.

Mr. President,

the Czech Republic reiterates its support to the goals of the Ottawa Convention and will continue to work towards them with concrete deeds. Our common goals are achievable.

Thank you for your attention.