



MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN
AFFAIRS OF FINLAND

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

**Statement by Finland delivered by H.E. Päivi Kairamo,
Permanent Representative of Finland**

Geneva, 2 December, 2015

Mr. President,

Please accept my warmest congratulations to you, Mr. President, on your election and assurances of my delegations full support. Let me also commend the Interim Director and the staff of the ISU for their excellent work throughout the past year.

Mr. President,

Finland is proud to be a States Party to this important Convention, which has significantly contributed to the global disarmament more than a decade already. The implementation of the Ottawa convention has also made a difference in its humanitarian and development aims. Through persistent hard work and significant efforts, the international community is step by step moving towards a world free of anti-personnel mines. Let us not lose this sight. It is my great pleasure to be able to inform you that Finland, for its own part, has been able to take a significant step on this road by completing the destruction of our anti-personnel landmine stockpiles as of August this year. In practice, this means that we have destroyed well over 1 million mines well ahead of our 2016 deadline.

We will, in accordance with Article 3 of the Convention, leave 16 500 anti-personnel landmines for training purposes in the areas of mine detection, mine clearance and mine destruction. We estimate that this will serve our educational needs for several years to come, and we hope that the level of mine clearance expertise – that we intend to uphold – can also be utilized in support of other countries.

In this context, I would also like to congratulate Mozambique for the outstanding achievement, as the first heavily mine-contaminated country, to become completely

cleared of mines. This has called for determination and hard work over almost for two decades. Your milestone example provides a model for all the State Parties.

Mr. President, Dear Colleagues,

While we may have many reasons for optimism and for feeling confident about the progress we have made, Finland is also deeply troubled by the harsh reality of constant use of anti-personnel mines, which still today leads to suffering and new victims in different parts of the world. We are particularly concerned about the situation in certain areas of Ukraine where the number of **UXO** victims seems to be increasing.

We are also deeply troubled by the increasing use of IED's and the number of innocent civilians, especially women and children, they claim as victims every year. We, the international community, need to find means to address these threats and protect those mostly in need of protection. Our thoughts are especially with the people in Syria, who are facing the dire threat of IED's and UXO's. It is clear that there will be a time when massive clearance efforts are needed to ensure a safe and secure country for everyone. We all need to keep on working for a sustainable solution in Syria, no matter how challenging the situation is.

It is clear that progress has been achieved, but many challenges remain requiring a major commitment by the States Parties. For our part Finland is committed to fulfilling its duties to mine clearance also in the future.

Thank you.