

PART II

DECLARATION OF THE FOURTH MEETING OF THE STATES PARTIES

1. We, the States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, along with other States, international organizations and institutions and non-governmental organizations, gathered in Geneva, reaffirm our unwavering commitment to the total eradication of anti-personnel mines and to addressing the insidious and inhumane effects of these weapons. We commit ourselves to intensify our efforts in those areas most directly related to the core humanitarian objectives of the Convention.
2. We celebrate the growing support for the Convention, ratified by 116 States and acceded to by another 12. With an additional 17 countries having signed, but not yet ratified the Convention, the number of States parties and signatories now totals 145, including more than 40 mine-affected States. We call upon those that have not done so, to ratify or accede to the Convention. We also call upon all States in the process of formally accepting the obligations of the Convention, to provisionally apply the terms of the Convention.
3. We recognize that the new international norm established by the Convention is being demonstrated by the successful record of implementation of the Convention, including the conduct of many States not party to the Convention respecting the provisions therein. A total of 88 States parties no longer possess stockpiled anti-personnel mines, including 34 which have completed stockpile destruction since the entry into force of the Convention. A further 22 State parties are in the process of destroying their stockpiles. Furthermore, over US\$ 1 billion has been allocated since the Convention was negotiated to address the global landmine problem, in addition to the resources being allocated by mine-affected countries themselves.
4. We feel encouraged by the fact that over the past year, a considerable amount of land was cleared of anti-personnel mines, that casualty rates in several of the world's most mine-affected States have again decreased, that landmine victim assistance has improved, and that our cooperative efforts continue to contribute to this progress.
5. While recognizing the success of the Convention, we remain deeply concerned that anti-personnel mines continue to kill, maim and threaten the lives of countless innocent people each day, that the terror of mines prevents individuals from reclaiming their lives and that the lasting impact of these weapons denies communities the opportunity to rebuild long after conflicts have ended.
6. We deplore any use of anti-personnel mines. Such acts are contrary to the object and purpose of the Convention and exacerbate the humanitarian problems already caused by the use of these weapons. We urge all those who continue to use, produce, otherwise acquire, stockpile, retain and/or transfer anti-personnel landmines, to cease immediately and to join us in the task of eradicating these weapons. We particularly call upon the States outside the Convention, which have recently used anti-personnel mines and/or continue to produce to stop these activities.

7. We expect those States, which have declared their commitment to the object and purpose of the Convention and which continue to use anti-personnel mines, to recognize that this is a clear violation of their solemn commitment. We call upon all States concerned to respect their commitments.

8. Recognizing the need to secure full compliance with all obligations of the Convention, we reaffirm our commitment to effectively implement the Convention and to comply fully with its provisions. We do so in the spirit of cooperation and collaboration that has characterized this process. In the event of serious concerns of non-compliance with any of the obligations of the Convention, we acknowledge our responsibility to seek clarification of these concerns, in this cooperative spirit.

9. We recall that the four-year maximum time period for the destruction of stockpiled anti-personnel mines is less than one year away for those States which became parties in 1999. We also recall that as soon as possible, but not later than 10 years after the entry into force of this Convention, each State party must undertake to destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control. We encourage continuing national, regional and international initiatives aimed at fulfilling these obligations. At the same time, we congratulate those States parties that have already destroyed their stockpiles of anti-personnel mines and those that have made substantial progress in clearing mined areas.

10. We call upon all Governments and people everywhere to join in the common task to meet the enormous challenges of mine action, including victim assistance, to provide the technical and financial assistance required, and, where appropriate, to integrate these efforts into national development strategies. As States parties committed to the eradication of anti-personnel mines, we reiterate that assistance and cooperation for mine action will flow primarily to those that have forsworn the use of these weapons forever through adherence to, implementation of, and compliance with the Convention.

11. We recognize that to achieve the promise of this unique and important humanitarian instrument, we must continue working tirelessly in all parts of the world to end the use of anti-personnel mines, to destroy stockpiles, to cease development, production and transfers of these weapons, to clear mined areas to free land from its deadly bondage, to assist victims to reclaim their lives with dignity and to prevent new victims.

12. We reaffirm that progress to free the world from anti-personnel mines would be promoted by the commitment by non-State actors to cease and renounce their use in line with the international norm established by this Convention. We urge all non-State actors to cease and renounce the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel mines according to the principles and norms of International Humanitarian Law.

13. We warmly welcome the substantial progress made during the intersessional work programme. This programme continues to focus and advance the international community's mine action efforts, it greatly assists in our collective aim to implement the Convention and it provides a forum for mine-affected and other States to share experiences, acquire knowledge and enhance efforts to implement the Convention. We express our satisfaction that the intersessional

work programme has been carried out in the Convention's tradition of partnership, dialogue, openness and practical cooperation. We welcome the increasing participation of mine-affected States in the intersessional work programme and the valuable contribution of the Sponsorship Programme.

14. To further enhance the intersessional process, we commit ourselves to intensify our efforts in those areas most directly related to the core humanitarian objectives of the Convention. We recommit ourselves to proceed with our work in a manner consistent with the principles that have well served the intersessional programme to date, particularly informality and cooperation. We furthermore call upon all States parties and other interested actors to continue to participate actively in the work of the Standing Committees.

15. We acknowledge the positive work of the Coordinating Committee tasked with the coordination of the intersessional work programme, and its role in the strengthening of the intersessional process. We thank the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) for its essential support and its commitment to the intersessional process. And we express our appreciation to the GICHD for the prompt manner in which it established the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) in accordance with the decision taken by the States parties at the Third Meeting of the States Parties and to the ISU for quickly demonstrating its effectiveness and value to States parties.

16. We acknowledge the contributory role of the United Nations agencies involved in Mine Action.

17. We express our gratitude to the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) and other relevant non-governmental organizations, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and to regional and national organizations and agencies for their important and substantive contribution to the intersessional process and to the overall implementation and consolidation of the Convention.

18. In reflecting upon our progress and accomplishments, and in considering the work that lies ahead, we reconfirm our conviction to make anti-personnel mines objects of the past, our obligation to assist those who have fallen victim to this terror, and our shared responsibility to the memories of those whose lives have been lost as a result of the use of these weapons, including those killed as a result of their dedication to helping others by clearing mined areas or providing humanitarian assistance.