

FIFTH MEETING OF STATES PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION  
ON THE PROHIBITION OF THE USE, STOCKPILING, PRODUCTION  
AND TRANSFER OF ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES AND ON THEIR  
DESTRUCTION

**Statement by the Head of The Brazilian Delegation**

**Ambassador Marco A.D.Brandão**

Bangkok, 15-19 September 2003

Let me begin by congratulating you, Doctor Surakiart Sathirathai, on your election as President of this Fifth Meeting of States Parties to the Ottawa Convention. We are confident that under your able guidance and with your cooperative approach this meeting will be fruitful.

I would also like to thank the Government of Thailand for hosting the Fifth Meeting of States Parties. A Mine Ban Treaty meeting in South Asia will give impetus to efforts to build support for the Ottawa Convention.

Mr. President,

Article IV of the Landmine Convention states that "each State Party undertakes to destroy all stockpiles anti-personnel mines it owns or possesses no later than four years after the entry into force of this Convention". It is with great satisfaction that I confirm that Brazil fulfilled its obligations under Article IV.

In fact the majority of the mines which Brazil pledged to destroy under Article IV were effectively destroyed by April 2002, one year and a half before our deadline of October 2003. There remains only a small amount of mines yet to be destroyed. With the conclusion of the destruction of those remaining mines, Brazil will be in full compliance with its obligations under Article IV.

Our obligations under Article IV were not that difficult to fulfill. When the Convention entered into force, Brazil had a small amount of mines. Our national borders, with no less than ten different States and with an extension of no less than 16 thousand kilometers, were completely demined.

Mr. President,

As States parties fulfill their obligations under Article IV over time, the mine action community is expected to address other priorities, such as the implementation of Article V, and to confront issues like non-compliance with Article 1 and the fact that some 85% of the mines existing in the world today are still not covered by the Convention.

In order to give the Ottawa Convention a significant thrust so that it continues its struggle against the scourge of landmines, priority should be given to the goal of universalization, including the role of the non-governmental organizations community. Great possessors of anti-personnel mines should be encouraged to participate in the Convention. By way of clarifying the issue vis-à-vis public opinion, NGOs could play a decisive role.

Mr. President,

We consider that international cooperation is one of the main pillars of the Convention. Brazil was the facilitator in the negotiation of Article VI of the Convention. We are determined to continue cooperating

in international efforts in the field of humanitarian demining. Though Brazil is a developing country, it has done its share in contributing to international mine action. Brazil is among the main donors to the Assistance Program for Demining in Central America, established by the Organization of American States in 1991, and to the Comprehensive Action against Anti-personnel Mines, established by the OAS in 1998.

Brazil remains firmly committed to participating in efforts at international humanitarian demining. The presence of Brazilian deminers in Central America was a reality well before the Convention entered into force in 1999. We have participated actively in demining efforts undertaken by the Organization of American States by providing significant in-kind assistance to MARMINCA (Mission for Assisting the Removal of Landmines in Central America). The Brazilian Officers participating in MARMINCA have constituted nearly 50% of that Mission's experts. At the moment there are Brazilian experts participating in the Mission of Assistance for Mine Clearing in South America (MARMINAS) along the borders of Peru and Ecuador.

It is our expectation that the international community will continue unfalteringly to support mine action activities.

Mr. President,

I would like to refer to the upcoming Review Conference of the Ottawa Convention in Kenya next year. Like many others, we share the view that, after three years, the Mine Ban Treaty deserves a careful reassessment and a discussion on possible ways to enhance its effectiveness.

As for the preparatory work for 2004, you may rest assured of Brazil's full support and cooperation with a view to a fruitful meeting in Nairobi. We have also to express satisfaction for the able guidance of Ambassador Lint in conducting informal consultations for the Review Conference.

Brazil believes that in the preparatory process for the 2004 Review Conference we must avoid institutionalizing the Intersessional Programme of Work. Such institutionalization would be contrary to the understanding and intent of the States Parties, when they established the Intersessional Programme at the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of State parties, and of the negotiators of the Mine Ban Treaty.

In order to ensure the continued usefulness of the Intersessional Programme and an effective implementation of the Mine Ban Treaty, States Parties should be particularly careful not to mix the roles and purposes of the relevant formal and informal *fora*, given that the work to be carried out by each one of them is of a fundamentally different nature.

The Final Report of the Maputo Conference underlines that the work of the Standing Committees "should build on the approach and spirit of inclusiveness and engagement present in the informal Ottawa process". The functions of Co-Chairs and Co-Rapporteurs should continue to be fulfilled on the basis of a balanced representation between donor and affected countries, including in the Committee on the Status and Operation of the Convention.

We also believe that in humanitarian mine action, as in other fields of international cooperation, the United Nations has an indispensable role to play. The arrangements set up informally by States Parties to aid the attainment of the humanitarian goals of the Convention are not a substitute for the decision-making

bodies formally established by the Convention, nor are they intended to replace the roles that the Convention had formally attributed to the United Nations Organization.

Mr. President,

Effective mine action is a collective responsibility of the international community. For our humanitarian goals to be successful, donor countries must consistently live up to their obligations and commitments under article VI. Since the Mine Ban Treaty's entry into force more than three years ago, notable developments and important advances have taken place in the field of international humanitarian mine action. States Parties in a position to do so should, therefore, continue sponsoring established programs in mine-affected States that have demonstrated a strong commitment to the Mine Ban Treaty.

Mr. President,

At a time when multilateralism faces increasing challenges, particularly in the area of international security and weapons of mass destruction, concrete advances in the Mine Ban Treaty represent a promising signal. After more than three years of entry into force, the Ottawa Convention approaches a time of re-evaluation. With the benefit of hindsight we must struggle to continue supporting the goal of eliminating the scourge of landmines in the context of the Convention.

Let me conclude by reiterating the need to encourage all countries to accede to the Ottawa Convention. We will keep working to ensure that the goal of universalization continues to be a major objective of the Ottawa Process.

Thank you.