

**Statement delivered by the Ethiopian Delegation at the
Sixth meetings of the states parties of the mine ban treaty (Ottawa convention)
Zagreb, 28 November 2005**

Madam President,

It gives me a great pleasure to participate in this important meeting and It is our sincere hope that with your able leadership & the support of state parties representatives the meeting will come to successful conclusion.

Madame President & Distinguished participants, it has been a year since Ethiopia has ratified the convention. This has created a new momentum to the efforts that have been made by the government & non-governmental bodies to make the country free of land mines. In spite of the enormity of the challenge, with the adequate support & assistance from the international community and sustained effort from our side, we are quite confident that the goals & objectives stipulated in the convention could be achieved. In this regard, Ethiopian is among the few countries that are conducting Mine Action activities using the loan it has borrowed from the World Bank. And after the ratification of the convention the government has continued in its effort in various Mine Action activities.

In terms of Mine Clearance It is estimated that close to 2 million people are leaving in areas that are believed to be mine contaminated. The government through Ethiopian Mine action has cleared more than 18 million sq. meters of land and close to 17 thousand varieties of land mines & UXO's has been destroyed.

In order to minimize and control the damages caused by landmines, the Ethiopian Mine action Office has conducted Intensive mine risk education activities in collaboration with local & International stakeholders and community liaison tasks to the communities in habiting around the mined areas.

As far as Assisting the Victims of land mines is Concerned, although there are efforts that are being made by the government & non government actors, very small percentage of the victims are provided with rehabilitation & reintegration support. Given the enormity of the problem, this is a clear indication that much is needed to tackle the problem in terms the attention & coordination among the various stake holders, including the government, donor countries, International Organizations & NGO's & and allocation of the necessary resources

Our future plan includes strengthening the mine clearance activity by integrating the manual demining force with mine detection dog program & mechanical demining system. And the MRE activity to be more of community -based, through the involvement of the people living in the affected areas. About the victim assistance, efforts will be made to strengthen the information gathering and dissemination system pertaining to victims of landmines and coordination among the various government and non-government agencies to enable an effective implementation of the convention.

Finally we would like to express our gratitude to the countries, International organizations, & donors who have extended valuable assistance. And we would also like to call up on the International community to continue the assistance in an enhanced manner.

I Thank you.