

**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL****MESSAGE TO THE EIGHTH MEETING OF THE STATES PARTIES
TO THE CONVENTION ON THE PROHIBITION
OF THE USE, STOCKPILING, PRODUCTION AND TRANSFER
OF ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES AND ON THEIR DESTRUCTION
Dead Sea, 18 November 2007**

*Delivered by Mr. Sergio Duarte
High Representative for Disarmament Affairs*

I send warm greetings to all participants in the Eighth Meeting of the States Parties to the Mine Ban Convention. Let me congratulate every one of you on the tenth anniversary of the entry into force of this international humanitarian treaty. This milestone provides an excellent opportunity to review the Convention's impact, and to assess international progress towards a world without anti-personnel mines.

The treaty's success is incontestable. Most of the 155 State Parties have met their obligations to destroy their stockpiles of mines. The production, sale and transfer of anti-personnel mines have decreased drastically. Vast areas have been cleared, and untold thousands of lives have been saved as a direct result. At the same time, mine victims are being provided with better assistance, rehabilitation and reintegration.

The Convention's achievements are commendable. But we must not lose sight of the reality that anti-personnel mines continue to kill and maim in great numbers. They terrorize populations long after conflicts have ended. Their presence denies communities avenues to rebuild long after conflicts have ended, and combatants have gone home.

Your reaffirmation of the Convention's norms here in Jordan, in the very heart of the Middle-East, is of great significance. Acceptance of the Mine Ban Convention in this volatile region remains low. I hope you will continue to promote awareness on this issue, lobby for adequate funding for all five pillars of mine action, and push for universal acceptance of the Convention in the Middle East. In this context, let me commend Jordan's support for mine action, both within and beyond its borders.

The Mine Ban Convention is already among the international community's most successful disarmament instruments. I applaud your determination to make it yet more effective through universal adherence. And I urge all States that have not yet done so to accede, as soon as possible, to the Convention.

Anti-personnel landmines have no place in the world. Thank you for your commitment to their elimination, and please accept my best wishes for a successful meeting.