

# Press Release



## **Anti-landmines convention celebrates fifteen years of success; Convention president calls on all members of the Conference on Disarmament to join landmark treaty**

*Geneva 13 March 2014* – The President of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, or Ottawa Convention, marked fifteen years since the entry into force of this landmark humanitarian and disarmament instrument by appealing to all members of the United Nations' Conference on Disarmament that have not yet done so to join the Convention as soon as possible.

In his address, the Convention's President, Ambassador Boudjemâa Delmi of Algeria, also asked all States Parties to the Ottawa Convention to renew their efforts to implement the treaty.

"Fifteen years of intense work and remarkable efforts to implement this instrument have allowed the international community to bring upon significant progress in landmine awareness, demining, universal adoption of the treaty, stockpile destruction and humanitarian assistance to the victims but more needs to be done," said Ambassador Delmi.

With the Convention having entered into force fifteen years ago, on 1 March 1999, the Convention's President recounted what has transpired over the last decade and a half: "There are now 161 States that by joining this instrument have made a solemn commitment to its humanitarian objectives. This includes every State in Sub-Saharan Africa, every State but two in the Americas, all Member States of the European Union, and several other States in Asia and the Arab world; by joining the Convention they have all foresworn the use of this dangerous, unacceptable, inhumane weapon which brings so much suffering," said Ambassador Delmi.

"As many others, I was pleased when at the Thirteenth Meeting of the States Parties, the United States of America indicated that its landmine policy review is ongoing and that this great nation expects to be in a position to announce a decision soon," added Ambassador Delmi. "I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of us all, to appeal to the United States to join the other 161 States Parties that have joined the Convention. Such accession would be a tremendous advancement towards its universal adoption."

The Convention's President also noted other progress that has been made in fifteen years of work to implement the Convention: "In December, four States Parties declared completion of their obligation to clear all mined areas under their jurisdiction or control – Venezuela, Bhutan, Hungary and Germany," said Ambassador Delmi.

"There are now 27 States Parties that have complied with this obligation. In addition, Burundi and Mozambique reported that they aim to complete mine clearance by the time of their respective deadlines in 2014."

Ambassador Delmi also noted that since the Convention entered into force, the States Parties have destroyed over 44.5 million stockpiled mines and that, "while certainly more needs to be done for

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landmine survivors, especially in developing countries, undoubtedly the situation for the majority of mine victims is significantly better today than it was a decade ago. This is the time to appeal to all countries that have the financial, material or technical resources to assist mine-affected countries in providing adequate humanitarian assistance to landmine survivors.”

From 23 to 27 June 2014, the international community will gather at the highest possible level in Maputo, Mozambique for the Convention’s Third Review Conference.

The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention was adopted in Oslo in 1997, opened for signature in Ottawa the same year and entered into force on 1 March 1999.

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