

Press Release



War-torn Somalia officially bans anti-personnel mines

Geneva, 23 May 2012 – Somalia has joined the landmark Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, or *Ottawa Convention*, becoming the 160th State Party to the international treaty which bans the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel mines. With Somalia's accession, every state in Sub-Saharan Africa is now bound by the Convention.

"Somalia's decision to join this international movement is significant," said H.E. PRAK Sokhonn, the senior Cambodian Minister who presides over the Convention. "Somalia has decided, in the face of incredible challenges in the country, to do its utmost to end the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel mines."

Somalia is plagued with anti-personnel mines and other explosive remnants of war as result of both recent and historic conflicts. According to a United Nations assessment mission report, the landmine problem in Somalia is "both complex and diverse" and "not fully understood." What is known is that landmines and other explosive remnants of war continue to kill scores of women, men, girls and boys. The United Nations has reported that in 2010 there were 190 known casualties.

"We stand in solidarity with Somalia as well as with Somali landmine survivors," said H.E. PRAK Sokhonn. "Our hope is that Somalia will benefit from the experience of over a decade of implementation of the Convention to overcome the sizeable landmine challenge it faces."

The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention

The AP Mine Ban Convention was adopted in Oslo in 1997, opened for signature in Ottawa the same year and entered into force in 1999.

To date 160 States have joined the Convention; 155 of them no longer hold stocks of anti-personnel mines. Over 44.5 million mines have been destroyed by the States Parties. Of the 50 States that at one time manufactured anti-personnel mines, 34 are now bound by the Convention's ban on production. Most other parties have put in place moratoria on production and / or transfers of mines.

Of the 56 States Parties that have reported mined areas, 20 have completed implementation of their mine clearance obligations. Demining has resulted in millions of square metres of once dangerous land being released for normal human activity.

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For more information, interviews or information regarding the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention please email: Press@APMineBanConvention.org or contact Laila Rodriguez at +41 (0)22 906 1656. Connect with the Convention through our [website](#), [Facebook](#), [Flickr](#) or [Twitter](#).

AP Mine Ban Convention Implementation Support Unit