

OAS Support for Ecuador and Peru
11 February 2021

Mired Al-Hussein's Speech

Your Excellencies... dear friends,

As I mentioned to you earlier in my opening remarks, I had the great honour and privilege of visiting both Ecuador and Peru in 2014 in my capacity as one of the Special Envoys of the Convention. My big regret, however, was that I was unable to allot a little bit of time to do some tourism and see with my own eyes the beautiful nature and wonders that both countries treasure. I sincerely hope one day to visit again as I must see the phenomenal Galapagos Islands as well as the magnificent Machu Pichu. And hopefully my visit will coincide with both countries having fulfilled their commitments towards the APMBC...and I will be able to officially and wholeheartedly congratulate both countries for a job well done.

I am encouraged by the discussions we have had in the last couple of hours and am hopeful that it will lead to the establishment of fruitful partnerships... partnerships that will result in the completion of all obligations.

It is my solemn belief that the more countries like Ecuador and Peru embrace national ownership, the more likely that success will be achieved. Ownership of course means adopting a serious approach, formulating a detailed plan of action that has a clear timeline, garnering the needed national resources, as well as being transparent and forthcoming always vis-à-vis progress. To my knowledge, both Ecuador and Peru have always understood the importance of these elements and the need to be proactive in seeking solutions.

One thing is for sure is that the more mine affected states grasp, value and invest in national ownership, the more likely that support from donor countries will be forthcoming. It is not a guarantee but more likely. It is exactly this issue...that of national ownership...that was the secret of our success in Jordan...as it has been in many other countries.

During my visit in Ecuador to the Army Corps of Engineers at Fort La Balbina, in Pichincha, I was truly amazed by the professionalism and great sense of pride that the soldiers exhibited. It was obvious to me that they knew what the task at hand was and how it ought to be done. In all honesty, not many mine-affected countries around the world are as fortunate and well prepared in their demining capacities. Likewise in Peru I had the great honour of visiting the President of Peru's 'National Council for the Integration of People with Disabilities,' and was thoroughly impressed by how Peru was (and still is I believe) intimately involving persons with disabilities in its national planning to ensure the inclusion and full and active participation of landmine survivors.

This is so essential in Peru's case as it is also one of the 30 States (Jordan included) that unfortunately has a significant number of landmine survivors.

Anyhow... like I said earlier... both Ecuador and Peru I believe have all the elements for success...and both countries renewed their commitments in Oslo in 2019 by signing the Oslo Declaration.

In closing, I would like to take the opportunity of availing myself in support of your endeavors. I hope to very soon draft letters of support and encouragement to your respective Presidents, congratulating them on the progress made to date and encouraging them to see this through to the end. This will of course be done in full cooperation and with the assistance of the ISU and via your good offices.

To this end I would like to thank the honorable Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of **Ecuador** H.E. Arturo Cabrera Hidalgo, and the Acting Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of **Peru** H.E. Francisco Tenya Hasegawa, as well as the Secretary General of the OAS, H.E. Luis Almagro and the OAS Mine Action Office, the European Union, and Juan Carlos and the whole superb team of the ISU for putting this whole enterprise together.

Bravo to everyone!

Finally, I wish both the governments of Ecuador and Peru the very best of wishes for the future. And please remember that on this specific issue the weight of the whole Mine Ban Convention is in your corner and rooting for your success.

Thank you to you all.