

## ICBL Summary of the 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Party to the Mine Ban Treaty Geneva, Switzerland, 3-7 December 2012

### OPENING CEREMONY

3 December

**H.E Prak Sokhon**, Minister Attached to the Prime Minister of Cambodia and Vice President of the Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority opened the Twelfth Meeting of States Parties by highlighting the progress made and the notable challenges ahead, calling on all present to continue their engagement to the end. He noted with regret the fact that three States Parties are not in compliance with their obligations on stockpile destruction and called for increased vigilance to ensure antipersonnel (AP) mines are never used again. He presided over the appointment of **H.E Matjaz Kovacic**, Permanent Representative of Slovenia to the UN in Geneva, as president of the 12MSP.

The ICBL screened *The Mine Ban Treaty: Reaching for a Mine-free World*, a film documenting how the joint efforts of the ICBL, governments, the UN and the ICRC led to the creation of the Mine Ban Treaty, as well as the resulting progress on the ground since then.

Ambassador **Urs Schmid** of Switzerland was named Secretary-General of the meeting, and he noted that over the last 15 years, the implementation of the MBT has led to significant results in the field.

According to **Karl Victor Erjavec**, Slovenian Minister of Foreign Affairs, the comprehensive ban on AP landmines has become the universal norm, with more and more states joining the convention. In this respect, he welcomed Poland's imminent ratification of the treaty.

Swiss Minister of Foreign Affairs, **Didier Burkhalter**, listed three objectives to ensure the full implementation of the MBT: universality, security through clearance, and sustainability through victim assistance. He noted with regret that many states are late regarding their clearance targets and that much remains to be done on victim assistance as well.

On behalf of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, **ODA's Kassym-Jomart Tokayev** hailed the tremendous achievements realized, and called on states to spare no efforts to comply with their obligations under the MBT.

**Navanethem Pillay**, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, emphasized the links between the CRPD and the MBT in promoting the rights of persons with disabilities.

Concerned with slow rates of clearance in mine affected countries and the slow translation of states' commitments regarding victim assistance, ICRC president **Peter Maurer** called on States Parties to renew their commitments to the MBT.

Peace Nobel prize laureate, **Jody Williams** reminded states of the importance of the notion of humanitarian disarmament, which is at the heart of the MBT. She urged states to always keep in mind the realities of people living in mine-affected communities while pursuing their work at the international level.

Landmine survivor and ICBL ambassador **Tun Channareth** urged all states to join and

implement the treaty, challenging them to create a mine-free world by the end of the decade.

**Barbara Haering**, GICHD President, highlighted the importance of assistance to survivors, which should be considered as a key element of mine action programs.

#### **Mentions of ICBL or civil society**

**Didier Burkhalter** stressed the crucial role played by civil society: its efforts and energy have been instrumental. **Peter Maurer's** statement referred to victim assistance and mine clearance rates documented in the *Landmine Monitor*. **Karl Victor Erjavec** thanked the ICBL for its enormous contribution to a world without landmines. **Urs Schmid** and **Jody Williams** both emphasized the complementarity between the civil society and states in reaching the objectives of the MBT. **Schmid** thanked the civil society for its key role in creating and implementing the convention, and also thanked the ICBL for its anniversary video that illustrated past and future challenges.

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## **GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS**

### **3 December**

Twenty-three states and three additional delegations took the floor during the session. This included three states with very heavy contamination as well as four states not parties.

**Algeria** welcomed the significant progress made in stockpile destruction, clearance, victim assistance (VA), and universalization of the MBT, pointing nevertheless to the remaining challenges, including the need to mobilize financial resources to address implementation delays. **Canada** listed several important gaps in the implementation of the MBT, including the recent allegations of AP mine use, the non-compliance of three States Parties regarding their stockpile destruction obligations, the difficulties for States Parties to meet their clearance deadlines and the low level of support to VA. **Chile** said South-South cooperation is a cornerstone in implementing the MBT and the right way to shoulder responsibility.

**Finland** announced its stockpile destruction has begun and should be done by the end of 2015. **Germany** reported it has raised its contributions to mine clearance and VA: €18.3 million were spent in 2012 and €19.9 million are planned for 2013. **Indonesia** emphasized the importance of international cooperation, especially to VA.

**Japan** reiterated its commitment to encouraging states not parties in the Asia-Pacific region to accede to the MBT as soon as possible, and said it will continue to provide assistance to affected states. **Mozambique** announced it was working with Zimbabwe on an agreement to allow deminers free access across the border for the purpose of demining activities and said it had increased its demining capacity to complete clearance of all known mine areas by its deadline. Mozambique offered to host the Third Review Conference in 2014. **New Zealand** called on states remaining outside of the MBT to join the treaty without any further delay. **Nigeria** recalled it completed the destruction of all APMs located in known or suspected areas while noting that if any new mined areas were found it would clear them as a matter of urgent priority.

The **Philippines** reported it was setting up a project with the MILF, following the signature of the Framework Agreement in 2010, aimed at identifying and clearing suspected hazardous

areas in 21 municipalities in the southern Philippines. **South Sudan** said that peaceful conditions were allowing it to survey new regions, leading to new reports of areas containing APM and ERW. It also reported that from January to September 2012, 105 areas were cleared but 58 new areas were added. **Sudan** reported on its MRE activities which it considers as a key component of its mine action program, but it noted that recent political developments and economic stagnation negatively impacted mine action activities in the country.

**Thailand** said regional cooperation is crucial to enhancing the MBT's potential to achieve its objectives. **Ukraine** said it has over 5 million mines left to destroy and considered that with sufficient funds it will be able to destroy 1 million PFM per year. **Zambia** noted the efforts made by various states regarding VA, but called for concerted efforts in enhancing international cooperation and assistance to ensure these activities are not hindered by lack of resources and capacity.

**China** recalled it cannot join the MBT due to "legitimate national defense needs," but noted its appreciation for the humanitarian spirit of the treaty and its support for humanitarian demining in nearly 40 developing countries. **India** said it supports a vision of a world without APM and is committed to their eventual elimination. **Morocco** confirmed it doesn't produce or transfer APM, and stopped stocking and using APM since 1987 but that it couldn't join the MBT until its internal situation changed. **Poland** announced that its ratification was approved and would be deposited shortly, further adding it has managed to destroy 97% of its original APM stock, plans to retain no mines, and has no identified or suspected areas.

Kasia Derlicka, ICBL Director, spoke on behalf of the **ICBL** and welcomed the recent accessions to the MBT by Finland and Somalia, as well as the announcement of Poland's imminent ratification. But the ICBL remained concerned by new mine use this year in Syria, the allegation of APM use in Sudan and Yemen and by non-state armed groups, and the lack of information provided by Turkey on its investigations of alleged mine use.

The **European Union** said it remains determined to assist the states that need support in meeting their obligations under the MBT. **UNMAS** emphasized the need to mobilize new donors to support humanitarian mine action, including to enable local NGOs and local operators to assist their home countries.

### **Responses**

**Sudan** asked the ICBL to share information with its national mine action center regarding any allegations of mine use. **Turkey** dismissed any complaints about the duration of its legal proceedings by noting that legal proceedings do not have a deadline. **Ukraine** reported it has already eliminated 1 million mines and said it is doing its best to fulfill with the treaty obligations. **Yemen** replied that the national army is not using AP mines and claimed that recent use was done by non-state actors.

### **Reactions to allegations or incidents of use**

**Canada, New Zealand** and **Zambia** condemned the continued use of APM and called for an immediate review of such actions by the countries concerned. The **European Union** is seriously concerned by all allegations of recent use of APM, particularly by Syrian forces on the borders of Turkey and Lebanon. **Germany** strongly condemned any use of APM and deeply regretted the recent use of mines in Syria. It also expressed its concern regarding the alleged use by Sudan and Yemen, and finally called on all states, including Myanmar and

Israel, to avoid any further use. The **Philippines** expressed its grave concern regarding the continued indiscriminate deployment of APM by non-state armed groups.

**Mentions of ICBL or civil society**

**Canada** quoted the ICBL by saying the MBT is “a success in progress.” **Chile**, the **European Union**, **Germany**, **New Zealand**, and **Thailand** said NGOs and the civil society played an important role in implementing the MBT. **Nigeria** thanked the ICRC and HI for their support provided to victims. **Poland** thanked the Polish Red Cross and the ICBL for their continuous support during its process of ratifying the MBT. **South Sudan** welcomed NPA, MAG, DCA, HI, and FSD for their assistance in eliminating the suffering caused by APM.

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