
First meeting
Maputo, 3-7 May 1999
Agenda item 17

PRESIDENT'S PAPER

MAPUTO DECLARATION

Maputo, Mozambique
7 May, 1999

1. We, the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and to their Destruction, together with signatory States, are gathered in Maputo, Mozambique, joined by international organizations and institutions and non-governmental organizations, to reaffirm our unwavering commitment to the total eradication of an insidious instrument of war and terror: anti-personnel mines.
2. Even now, at the end of the century, anti-personnel mines continue to maim and kill countless innocent people each day; force families to flee their lands and children to abandon their schools and playgrounds; and prevent long-suffering refugees and displaced persons from returning to rebuild their homes and their lives. The real or suspected presence of anti-personnel mines continues to deny access to much-needed resources and services and cripples normal social and economic development.
3. We raise our serious concern at the continued use of anti-personnel mines in areas of instability around the world. Such acts are contrary to the aims of the Convention; they exacerbate tensions, undermine confidence and impede diplomatic efforts to find peaceful solutions to conflicts.
4. Therefore, even as we celebrate this First Meeting of the States Parties two months after the rapid entry-into-force of the Convention, we recognise that the enduring value of this unique international instrument rests in fully realizing the obligations and the promise contained within the Convention
 - to ensure no new use;
 - to eradicate stocks;
 - to cease development, production and transfers;

* Reissued for technical reasons

- to clear mined areas and thus free the land from its deadly bondage;
- to assist the victims to reclaim their lives and to prevent new victims.

5. We believe these to be common tasks for humanity and therefore call on governments and people everywhere to join us in this effort

6. To those who continue to use, develop, produce, otherwise acquire, stockpile, retain and transfer these weapons: cease now, and join us in this task.

7. To those who can offer technical and financial assistance to meet the enormous challenges of humanitarian mine action: intensify your efforts and help build the capacity of mine-affected countries themselves to increasingly take on these tasks.

8. To those who can offer assistance: help with the physical and psycho-social treatment and social and economic re-integration of mine victims, support mine awareness education programmes, and help those States in need to meet treaty obligations to demine and to destroy stockpiles, thus facilitating the widest possible adherence to the Convention.

9. To those that have not yet joined this community of States Parties: accede quickly to the Convention. To those who have signed: ratify. If ratification will take more time: provisionally apply the terms of the Convention while you put in place the necessary domestic legislation.

10. To the international community: promulgate, implement and universalize the Convention, the new international standard and norm of behaviour it is establishing.

11. In this spirit, we voice our outrage at the unabated use of anti-personnel mines in conflicts around the world. To those few signatories who continue to use these weapons, this is a violation of the object and purpose of the Convention that you solemnly signed. We call upon you to respect and implement your commitments.

12. Know that, as a community dedicated to seeing an end to the use of anti-personnel mines, our assistance and cooperation will flow primarily to those who have foresworn the use of these weapons forever through adherence to and implementation of the Convention.

13. Driven by the sad reality that the people of the world will continue to suffer the consequences of the use of anti-personnel mines for many years to come, we believe it crucial that we use this First Meeting of the States Parties to ensure that we make continued, measurable progress in our future efforts to eradicate anti-personnel mines and to alleviate the humanitarian crisis caused by them.

14. We recognise that anti-personnel mines represent a major public health threat. The plight of mine victims has revealed the inadequacy of assistance for victims in the countries

most affected. Such assistance must be integrated into broader public health and socio-economic strategies to ensure not simply short-term care for victims, but special attention to the serious long-term needs for social and economic reintegration. Mine victims must be permitted to realise, with dignity, their place within their families and their societies. These issues must be accorded the highest political importance and practical commitment by States Parties and all those in the international community who care about this issue.

15. To this end, we commit ourselves to mobilise resources and energies to universalize the Convention, alleviate and eventually eradicate the human suffering caused by anti-personnel mines, including by striving to meet the goal of “zero victims”.

16. For these purposes, we, the States Parties, will implement an intersessional work programme to take us steadily forward to the next Meeting of the States Parties, which will take place in Geneva from 11 to 15 September 2000. This will enable us to focus and advance our mine action efforts and to measure progress made in achieving our objectives. This work will be based on our tradition of inclusivity, partnership, dialogue, openness and practical cooperation. In this regard, we invite all interested governments, international organizations and institutions and non-governmental organizations to join us in this task.

17. Our work programme will draw together experts, building on the discussions held here in Maputo, to address the key thematic issues of:

- the general status and operation of the Convention;
- mine clearance;
- victim assistance and mine awareness;
- stockpile destruction; and,
- technologies for mine action.

This intersessional work will, inter alia, assist us in developing, with the United Nations, a global picture of priorities consistent with the obligations and time-frames contained within the Convention, including with regard to international cooperation and assistance. It will also take into account important work done at the international, regional and sub-regional levels.

18. The work of our experts will begin just four months from now, in Geneva. We appreciate and accept the offer of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining to support our efforts. Our work will complement and reinforce the important mine action activities being undertaken by mine-affected States working in partnership with other States, international and regional organizations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector--also recognizing the United Nations system as an important actor in global mine action efforts.

19. Meeting here in one of the most mine-affected continents on earth and in a country which has experienced the ravages wreaked by these weapons on the Mozambican people and the social fabric of the nation, we focus our minds and strengthen our conviction on the need to make the killing fields of anti-personnel mines that have terrorized, maimed and killed people, destroyed lives and hope for too long, a relic of the past.

We are determined to succeed in our common task.

We are determined to work in partnership to this end.

We are determined to apply the principle of international humanitarian law, enunciated in the final preambular paragraph of the Convention itself that “...the right of the parties to an armed conflict to choose methods or means of warfare is not unlimited...”

This is our firm pledge to future generations.
