



1997 Nobel Peace Prize Co-Laureate

**ICBL Statement on the African Common Position on Anti-Personnel Landmines  
Delivered by Margaret Arach Orech, ICBL Ambassador  
9 September 2009, Pretoria, South Africa**

Distinguished Delegates,

Nearly 11 years ago, a landmine in Northern Uganda injured me. A year later in 1997, the Mine Ban Treaty was opened for signature and my country was among those who signed it. Right from the start, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) in its diversity, working with 156 States, has been so instrumental in the Mine Ban Treaty.

The ICBL enjoys partnership with so many of the African States, other NGOs and the Donor community. This partnership has brought us this far, and we believe, will take us further till the whole of Africa comes under the banner of the Mine Ban Treaty.

It is a fact that the strong African leadership was foundational in the successful implementation of the Mine Ban Treaty and the ICBL believe African leadership will yet again be called upon in the full implementation of the recently adopted Convention on Cluster Munitions. To date, 36 African States have signed the CCM and 3 namely Sierra Leone, Niger, and Zambia have since ratified the CCM. We call upon the other African States to quickly ratify, accede and implement the CCM as it complements the MBT.

Africa is one of the most affected continents as well as the most challenged in terms of resources, yet it has persevered to be among the most compliant in fulfilling the obligations of the MBT. Regional initiatives have been held that gave guidance to the African States in making efforts to fulfill their obligations to the Mine Ban Treaty. Great strides have been undertaken by States Parties, Donors and Civil Society Organization and we pledge to diligently continue until the menace of landmines is no more!

It is imperative that in taking an African Common Position on the MBT, States renew their commitment to the Mine Ban Treaty and the goal of a mine-free world. The ICBL call on States Parties in Africa to remain compliant with all obligations of the Convention, particularly of course the non-use, but also ensure Stockpile destruction for those who still have to do so.

We urge all African States to speed up their efforts in clearing all remaining contaminated areas under their jurisdiction, to conclude, where this has not been done already, National Plan of Actions for Survivors of Landmines / ERWs/Cluster Munitions and other persons with disabilities with sufficient resources, capacity and coordination. African States should strengthen their resolve in mainstreaming Mine Action into development, adopt a more focused framework to discuss resource mobilization and use, and foster cooperation between and among African States and International partners to specifically include long term funding for victim assistance and other obligations under the MBT.

In Conclusion, we urge all African countries to:

Come to the Cartagena Summit at the highest level possible (Head of State/Government or Minister)  
Share at the Summit significant recent accomplishments (e.g. completion of clearance; casualties data collection or a VA program; decision to accede to the Treaty or start stockpile destruction, etc)

Commit: - what specifically you plan to accomplish in the next months and years (e.g. completion of clearance within X of years; implementing VA plan of action within the X nr of years; joining the treaty in X nr of years, etc) last but not least, Support a strong Cartagena Declaration, Action Plan, and Review and stay committed to the Mine Ban Treaty and the goal of a mine-free world for the next 5 years by implementing the Cartagena Action Plan and all commitments you will endorse at the Cartagena Summit.

Thank you for listening.