

Canadian Statement – Universalization
2nd Review Conference – The Cartagena Summit on a Mine Free World

Thank-you Madame President

In the last two years no new States have joined the Convention. The reasons for that are varied. Some states claim that they need this obsolete weapon for their national security, some say they need to protect their borders, others that they lack the resources to meet their obligations under the Convention, still others that this Convention is too low on the priority list in a busy legislative process. Some States Parties are willing to accept that the Convention has established a universal norm in that use of anti-personnel mines is almost non-existent. In reality many states that have not acceded to the Convention are prepared to use mines, many of their armies regularly train with them and useless as they are from a military utility perspective, they continue to pose a threat to people around the world.

Madame President some would say that with 156 States Parties we have achieved our aim, the countries that remain outside of the Convention are determined to stay out and do not merit our continued universalization efforts. It is certainly Canada's view however, and the view of the active members of the Universalization Contact Group, that our work is not yet done. Arguably we are now entering a period in our universalization when it is tough sledding. In our view what that means is that we must intensify our efforts to encourage ratification and accession.

Madame President we need increased effort by more States Parties and some States Parties are taking up this challenge. We will see at least two new initiatives this week and, once states endorse the Cartagena Action Plan, hopefully all States Parties will indeed "seize every opportunity" to universalize the Convention, and at the highest levels.

In the last meeting of the Universalization Contact Group, the group noted many of the tools that are available to advance universalization and the willingness of many to share their experiences.

The UCG also completed a review of the 39 States not yet party. We believe it is possible to have up to 17 new members in the short to medium term. The remaining 22 countries will likely take a longer time.

Madame President, this Summit offers a tremendous opportunity to raise the profile of mine action and the Convention. We encourage each State Party to take up their responsibility as stated in the preamble of the Convention "*Emphasizing the desirability of attracting the adherence of all States to this Convention, and determined to work strenuously towards the promotion of its universalization in all relevant fora.*" With continued effort we will reach our collective goal of a mine-free world.

In closing Madame President, I would like to advise the Conference that the Universalization Contact Group will meet on Thursday 3 December, 2009 at 13:00 in Comison 1. All States Parties and organizations interested in universalization of the Convention are welcome, indeed encouraged, to attend.

Thank you