



United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action
Fifteenth Meeting of States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
(28 November – 1 December 2016)

Statement on Universalization

Santiago, 1 December 2016

Mr. President,¹

The following statement is delivered on behalf of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA) comprising the United Nations entities involved in mine action².

With the approval of the Cabinet Ministers of Sri Lanka earlier this year, this community will welcome a 163rd member soon, marking a step further towards universalization. With 162 States Parties, this Convention can be considered one of the most successful instruments of international law, demonstrating that International Humanitarian Law saves lives.

Nonetheless, to date, over 30 States have not yet either acceded to or ratified the Convention. The lack of verified information on anti-personnel mines contamination and stockpiles from some of these States is also of concern. The United Nations urges countries not party to the Convention to acknowledge the damage caused by mines, as well as their social, economic and environmental cost.

Furthermore, an alarming development over the past years has been the rise in the use of mines and other explosive hazards. Though the scope of this Convention is limited

¹ Heraldo Muñoz, Foreign Minister of Chile

² The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) / United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) (Chair), Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), UN Development Programme (UNDP), Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS), UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), World Food Programme (WFP), World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) (Observer), and the World Bank (Observer).



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in this regard, its universalization could curtail the access of non-state actors to anti-personnel mines. The United Nations calls on States Parties to be productive and do their utmost to prevent new use of Anti-Personnel Mines.

The United Nations would also like to seize this opportunity to sincerely encourage the Republic of the Marshall Islands, which is the sole remaining signatory to the Convention, to take a step further and to ratify this Convention.

UNMAS welcomes the State of Palestine reporting on a voluntary basis to this Convention, and UNMAS will continue to provide technical guidance and support to the Palestinian Mine Action Centre in its coordination of the clearance of minefields in the West Bank.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations reminded us earlier this year of the importance of mine action to people all over the world when he said: “Mine action is an investment in humanity³.” Thus, the onus is on us all to invite States not party to this Convention to jointly invest in humanity with us, and to make the “2025 Mine-Free World” vision a reality.

Thank you.

³ Message of the Secretary-General, 4 April 2016, International Day of Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action