

## FACT SHEET

### CONVENTION ON THE PROHIBITION OF THE USE, STOCKPILING, PRODUCTION AND TRANSFER OF ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES AND ON THEIR DESTRUCTION

The 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction (commonly known as the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention or “the Ottawa Treaty”) was opened for signature in Ottawa on 3 December 1997 and entered into force on 1 March 1999. The purpose of the Convention is to put an end to the humanitarian crisis created by the use of anti-personnel mines – weapons which do not discriminate between civilians and combatants and cause unnecessary suffering or superfluous injury. The Secretary-General of the United Nations is the Depository of the Convention.



#### The Scope of the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention

- The Convention prohibits under any circumstances the use, development, production, acquisition, stockpiling and transfer of anti-personnel mines;
- Within four years after joining the Convention each State party must destroy all its stocks of existing anti-personnel mines;
- Within ten years after joining the Convention each State party must destroy all existing anti-personnel mines laid in the ground;
- The Convention calls upon States parties to provide assistance for the social and economic reintegration as well as care and rehabilitation of mine victims, for the promotion of mine awareness programmes, and the provision of mine destruction and clearance. Each State party has the right to seek assistance in fulfilling its obligations under the Convention;
- Each State party provides annual transparency reporting on measures taken to implement the Convention;
- The Convention also contains a set of compliance and confidence building measures.

#### Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention Implementation Machinery

Meetings of the States parties are held annually in Geneva or in a mine-affected State at the end of November or beginning of December. These meetings consider matters with regard to the general status and operation of the Convention, take stock of the progress in its implementation, analyse challenges and take decisions on the way forward, promote cooperation and assistance and the treaty’s universalization. Short informal intersessional meetings of experts are also held annually to assist the implementation of the Convention’s key issues and prepare the annual Meetings of the States parties.

Four limited-membership committees consisting of 4 to 5 States parties each support the implementation of the Convention, namely: (i) Committee on Article 5 Implementation (destruction of anti-personnel mines in mined areas); (ii) Committee on Cooperative Compliance; (iii) Committee on Victim Assistance; and (iv) Committee on Enhancing Cooperation and Assistance. These Committees do not have decision making authority, which rests solely with the States Parties at their formal meetings.

### **The Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention Implementation Support Unit**

An Implementation Support Unit (ISU) for the Convention accountable directly to the States parties was established in 2001 within the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining. The ISU is funded by voluntary contributions and supports the Convention's implementation machinery and office holders, provides advice and technical support on implementation and universalization to individual States parties, provides information and communications to States not parties and the general public, keeps records of the meetings of the Convention and liaises and cooperates with international organisations and partners involved in mine action.

### **The Role of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs**

In close cooperation with the Convention's Implementation Support Unit, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) provides support and facilitates the implementation of the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention at the international level.

UNODA has been delegated some key responsibilities entrusted to the Secretary-General of the United Nations under the Convention. In particular, UNODA is responsible for:

- convening and organizing the annual Meetings of the States parties to the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention, providing administrative, procedural and logistical support, and serving as the Secretariat of these meetings;
- maintaining the database of annual national reports submitted by the States parties pursuant to Article 7 of the Convention (transparency measures);
- supporting the Secretary-General in the implementation of his/her responsibilities aimed at facilitation and clarification of compliance under Article 8 of the Convention and handling the Roster of National Experts for fact-finding missions;
- participating in universalization activities and assisting the Secretary-General in his efforts to promote the Convention among non-party States.

#### **Mine Ban Convention Implementation Facts**

- The International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) – a broad-based coalition of non-governmental organizations – and its coordinator Jody Williams were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1997 for their role in the establishment of the Convention.
- To date, 162 States have ratified or otherwise acceded to the Convention
- 85 States parties have completed their stockpile destruction programmes with more than 48 million stockpiled anti-personnel mines destroyed.
- 29 States parties have already done so, but 31 States parties are still to fulfil their mine clearance obligations.
- Despite the progress in clearing the areas contaminated by mines and explosive remnants of war, there are still thousands of incidents that occur each year in some 60 States still affected by anti-personnel mines. The vast majority (79%) of recorded casualties are civilians. Almost half of them are children (46%).
- 29 States parties have indicated having significant numbers of survivors for whom they must provide care. The Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention has led to considerable development of the very concept of victim assistance.

**For more information: <http://www.unog.ch/disarmament/aplc>**