



KENYA

STATEMENT

BY

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**AT THE
CONFERENCE OF DISARMAMENT**

**GENEVA
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On behalf of the Kenya delegation to the Conference of Disarmament, allow me to take this opportunity to congratulate you for the assumption of the Presidency of the Conference. We assure you of the support of the Kenyan delegation during your Presidency.

Allow me to also congratulate your immediate predecessors, Amb. Pablo Macedo of Mexico and Amb. Khasbazaryn Bekhbat of Mongolia for the tireless efforts they have made to steer the work of the conference. The informal plenary debates we have had under their leadership have proven that it was indeed a path worth treading in the Conference's efforts to make progress in its substantive work.

Ambassador Omar Hilale is an accomplished diplomat with admirable talent and leadership qualities that we are confident will enable the Conference to promote a positive atmosphere that has characterized the Conference since January, when Kenya had the privilege to preside over the Conference.

I have asked for the floor to join a number of speakers who have previously underlined the importance of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction. As you are no doubt aware my country, Kenya will be privileged to host the First Review Conference of this Convention in Nairobi from 29 November to 3 December 2004.

I wish to take this opportunity to extend an invitation to all delegates to the Conference on Disarmament to attend the Review Conference in Nairobi.

The Ottawa Convention enjoys a membership of 142 States Parties as at March 2004. As we approach the Review Conference, we are particularly happy to note that the Convention has achieved

significant success in the field of disarmament. It is unique in the sense that it is both a humanitarian and disarmament treaty. Its humanitarian objectives are shared universally even by those who are still outside the treaty. Unlike any other disarmament treaty, the States Parties have demonstrated an unparalleled political will to ensure its success.

The partnership between Governments and the civil society is yet another unique characteristic of this Convention.

Since its adoption, the resort to the use of anti-personnel mines has diminished considerably, while their production has also decreased. More than 30 million stockpiles have been destroyed.

The First Review Conference provides us with an important opportunity to evaluate areas of progress and to address the remaining challenges. One of these challenges is the question of universality of the Convention. While the Ottawa Convention is a milestone in the history of disarmament, it remains a matter of concern that major states are still not parties while more than 200 million stocks are still held by States.

The menace of landmines has caused untold damage to innocent civilians, especially in Africa. The casualty figures in such countries as Angola and Mozambique is indeed mind boggling.

It is for these reasons that the Government of Kenya has extended an invitation to States Parties and non-States Parties alike to participate in the Conference.

In this regard, we welcome the recent pronouncements by the Governments of China and the United States at the ongoing intersessional meeting reaffirming their support for of the principles enshrined in the Convention.

In particular, we welcome the United States Landmines policy announced in February this year in which they have, among other things, categorically given their commitment to stop using persistent

anti-personnel or anti-vehicle land mines on any battlefield or for any purpose anywhere in the world by 2010 and that they will seek a worldwide ban on the sale or export of all persistent landmines to prevent the spread of technology that kills and maims civilians.

These are gestures which must be welcomed and encouraged by all people of goodwill.

Before I conclude, allow me to convey our appreciation to Amb. Wolfgang Petritsch, President-Designate of the Conference for the commendable efforts he continues to make to ensure the Review Conference is a success. Our thanks also go to the Friends of Nairobi for the support, financial or otherwise, they have extended to Kenya in her preparations to host the Conference. The unflinching support by the Government of Canada is, exemplary and worth singling out.

Thank you.