



CANADA

The Permanent Mission of Canada
to the United Nations
at Geneva

La Mission permanente du Canada
auprès des Nations Unies
à Genève

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**STATEMENT
BY
ANN POLLACK
ACTING PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT**

**CANADIAN STATEMENT TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT
ON THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OTTAWA CONVENTION**

Geneva, Thursday 26 February, 2004

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**DÉCLARATION
PAR
ANN POLLACK
REPRÉSENTANT PERMANENTE A.J. AUPRÈS
DE LA CONFÉRENCE DU DÉSARMEMENT**

**DÉCLARATION DU CANADA À LA CONFÉRENCE DU DÉSARMEMENT
À L'OCCASION DU CINQUIÈME ANNIVERSAIRE DE LA CONVENTION D'OTTAWA**

Genève, le jeudi 26 février 2004

Mr. President,

March 1st marks the fifth anniversary of the entry-into-force of the Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction. This is a significant milestone in the life of the Convention, whose first Review Conference, the Nairobi Summit on a Mine-Free World, takes place later this year. This fifth anniversary will be celebrated in Canada through Landmine Awareness Week, including a number of NGO-organized events across the country, focussing on the many Canadian and other individuals who are making a real difference through mine action all around the world.

The Convention has enjoyed significant success in its first five years. It has grown impressively, with 10 new members joining in the past year, bringing to 141 the number of countries that have now ratified or acceded. It is fitting that on this anniversary date the Convention also enters into force for four of these countries: thus we welcome two members of the CD, Belarus and Turkey, and two observers, Greece and Serbia and Montenegro, as they become States Parties to the Ottawa Convention on 1 March. This rapid growth testifies to the widespread determination to address the humanitarian problems that landmines create. We reiterate our call to all CD members and observers that have not yet done so to join this Convention, and particularly to take steps toward doing so during this most significant year. Canada encourages those countries emerging from conflict to consider the Ottawa Convention and its norms as possible confidence-building measures.

Mr. President, the Ottawa Convention, as its title indicates, prohibits the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel landmines, and provides for their removal, clearance and destruction. The Ottawa Convention is comprehensive; it is legally binding; it is effective; it has a large and growing membership. It thus does not need to be supplemented by a partial instrument, as some have mentioned in this forum.

The goal remains the universality of the Convention. Canada is proud to chair the Universalization Contact Group, working towards this objective, and we are confident of new members before the Review Conference. Active universalization efforts are underway, reaching out to States not party, including through networks of retired senior military officers and of parliamentarians, to engage them on a variety of levels.

In the interim, those states that consider that they are unable to join the Convention should take steps themselves, individually or collectively, such as a stating commitment to its humanitarian goals, undertaking moratoria to not produce or transfer anti-personnel landmines, beginning stockpile destruction, funding mine action, submitting voluntary Article 7 reports, attending the Review Conference as an observer. Such steps would acknowledge the important norm established by the Convention and the impact that it is having on modifying behavior, at a time when the eyes of the world will be focused on the problems of anti-personnel landmines.

I do not need to repeat that the Ottawa Convention is making a real difference, in mentality, practice and in the lives of civilians, to eliminate the scourge of anti-personnel mines: land is being cleared, returning it to productive use; huge numbers of stockpiles have been destroyed; the number of new victims has been reduced. Governments, regional and international organizations and civil society, all increasingly aware of the dangers of landmines, are actively working together to universalize the Convention, to improve aid to victims, to undertake mine clearance, to destroying stockpiles within deadlines, and to make the general public more aware of the awful humanitarian and development costs of using anti-personnel mines. A collective spirit and a partnership approach are the hallmark of the Convention, all working together and contributing in a shared spirit of cooperation, as we witnessed yet again in the very full session of Standing Committees earlier this month.

Mr. President, the Convention's first Review Conference will take place in Nairobi, Kenya from November 29 to December 3, to celebrate its successes and recognize the remaining challenges. It will culminate in a high level segment, marking the anniversary of its signature in Ottawa,. It is fitting that this event takes place in Africa, the most mine-affected region of the world, drawing attention to the extent of this problem on the continent, as well as globally.

Its central message will be that progress has been made, but that more needs to be done. States Parties to the Ottawa Convention will testify to their collective will and political commitment to move ahead to finish the job, will renew political and financial commitments to continue to eliminate anti-personnel landmines, will further seize responsibility to clear mines and to assist victims. We will state our determination to do so through a concrete Action Plan to fulfil these aims, which Canada has the honour to be closely involved in helping to develop. We will communicate our vision to the world through a High Level Declaration, to reaffirm the success of the Convention, to address the challenges that remain and to renew commitment to its full implementation.

Mr. President, at a time when the Conference on Disarmament continues to be unable to agree upon a Program of Work to address pressing issues affecting collective and national security, it is reassuring that so many members of the international community - including a large number of members of this body - are moving ahead to address a vital issue of human security, which is making a real difference in the lives of so many people, communities and nations. It is my hope that this positive spirit may infect the CD.

Thank you, Mr. President.