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STATEMENT

by H.E. Mr. Nebojša Kaluđerović  
Permanent Representative of Montenegro  
to the United Nations

at the Second Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of  
the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Antipersonnel Mines and on their  
Destruction

Cartagene de Indias, Colombia  
29 November – 4 December 2009

*Please check against delivery*

Madam President,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate H.E. Ambassador Susan Eckey on the election as the Chair of the Cartagena Summit. Confident that under your able chairmanship the Conference will come to a successful conclusion.

In addition, please allow me to join previous speakers in expressing gratitude to the Colombian Government for excellent preparations of this important event, warm hospitality and effective leadership.

Madam President,

Convening of this Conference is timely, taking into consideration the vital topics under consideration, including the evaluation of the progress achieved so far towards the Mine-Free World, ways to uphold the momentum and focus of the international community on this important issue, as well as further steps that are necessary in order to fully implement the Ottawa Convention.

Montenegro fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by Sweden on behalf of the European Union. It is my great honour and privilege to address you today in my national capacity on behalf of the Government of Montenegro.

Madam President,

Montenegro, despite being the youngest member of the United Nations, has, after restoration of its independence, spared no effort in renewing its membership and revitalizing its full commitment to the organizations, treaties and conventions dealing with the enhancement of international peace and security, respect and promotion of human rights, as well as the overall wellbeing of individuals and the society as a whole.

The Convention is an internationally binding instrument that covers all of the above-mentioned areas. It is not only a disarmament agreement, but also a humanitarian one, an embodiment of the goals of a long and justified campaign fought to achieve Mine-Free World. Even though we are still not at the end of our journey, we can proudly say that the provisions of the Ottawa Convention are just a step away from becoming an internationally recognized rule.

Madam President,

Montenegro does not produce, possess or transfer antipersonnel mines. Antipersonnel mines stockpiles had been destroyed before the deadline and Montenegro has not retained any mines for training purposes. The Government has enacted regulations whose scope covers questions of concern for the Convention, including military supply, foreign trade of armaments and military equipment, conduct of armed forces in conflict situations in the context of respecting the international humanitarian law, the question of penalties for the use of forbidden means of combat, as well as manufacture of forbidden weapons.

In cooperation with the neighbouring countries we have cleared border areas suspected to be contaminated by antipersonnel mines and further efforts will be made to clear all other localities which might be contaminated by other unexploded ordnances. Having in mind that

Montenegro is a country affected by the use of cluster munitions I am pleased to inform you that our Parliament has ratified the Cluster Munitions Convention of which the Depository will soon be notified.

In the field of victim assistance we should mention that Montenegro has ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as well as the Optional Protocol. Also the respective authorities have drafted and enacted a Strategy for the Social Integration of Persons with Disabilities, a document which in a comprehensive way regulates the realization of the human rights and further improvement of the life conditions of persons with disabilities.

Currently, 156 States have committed themselves to respect and implement Mine Ban Convention. The Convention has made significant progress in considerably decreasing production and use of antipersonnel mines, clearing wide areas and destroying stockpiles. In addition, and most importantly, the number of people killed or injured has been drastically reduced.

However, additional efforts must be made to overcome challenges that still remain, including further promotion of the universality of the Convention. Antipersonnel mines continue to be used in conflicts around the world causing human suffering and impeding post-conflict development. Bearing that in mind, universal adherence to the Mine Ban Convention would make it more difficult, if not impossible for armed non-state actors to acquire and use antipersonnel mines.

Montenegro fully supports the implementation of all other instruments aimed to prohibit weapons and munitions that cause unacceptable harm to civilians, and is strongly determined to contribute to the efforts made in all foras to further strengthen international law in this field.

Madam President,

This Conference has provided us with an opportunity not only to reflect on the results achieved in the past ten years, but also to plan for the future and set targets in a structured way for destroying remaining stockpiles, clearing mines and assisting mine victims.

This is a global problem that requires a global solution. And only by working together and remaining fully committed, we will be able to overcome challenges we are facing.

We are, therefore, certain that the outcome of the Conference, referring mainly to the Cartagena Declaration and Cartagena Action Plan, will substantially contribute to the implementation of the Convention and help lay the foundation for reaching our ultimate goal of a world free of anti-personnel landmines.

Thank you!