



Cartagena Summit on a Mine-Free World

Statement by Ireland

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Madam President,

I would like to express sincere appreciation to the Government of Colombia for hosting this Summit and for the arrangements this week and to congratulate you on your effective management of our work here.

Ireland fully associates itself with the statement made by Sweden on behalf of the European Union.

The Cartagena Summit marks a significant moment in the life of our Convention. It is our opportunity to look back at what has been achieved in the past decade, to renew our commitment to end the suffering caused by anti-personnel mines and to work to achieve a world free of mines. Since the Nairobi Summit, significant strides have been made on universalisation, stockpile destruction, mine clearance, victim assistance, international cooperation and assistance, transparency and implementation support. Ireland has taken many measures to implement the Nairobi Action Plan and will vigorously work to implement what we have agreed here in Cartagena.

Universalisation remains a significant challenge and Ireland, in accordance with the Cartagena Action Plan, will seize every opportunity to promote adherence to and observance of the norms of the Convention.

Ireland underlines the pivotal role of mine action in meeting the UN Millennium Development Goals. We include mine action activities in our ongoing development programmes and our funding in the period since 2005 has amounted to over €21 million. To facilitate long-term planning and predictability, Ireland has entered into a number of multi-annual funding arrangements in various regions of the world. Our mine action expenditure has covered mine clearance, mine risk education, victim assistance, advocacy and universalisation efforts. We have also made a significant contribution to the Implementation Support Unit and I am pleased to indicate that a further grant of €35,000 will be made for 2009.

Ireland recognises the invaluable contribution made by civil society in promoting the development of new treaties in the areas of international humanitarian law and disarmament, and to ensuring their universalisation and implementation. We therefore support a number of UN agencies and NGOs whose activities dovetail with Irish foreign policy objectives.

Recent years have seen a number of emerging trends in international law. Protocol V to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons recognised the problems caused by explosive remnants of war, similar in many ways to those caused by landmines. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities provides a foundation for a people-centred and rights-based approach to these problems. Building on these, the Convention on Cluster Munitions, adopted in Dublin in May 2008 and signed in Oslo a year ago, established groundbreaking provisions on victim assistance. In addition, the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development has highlighted the link between disarmament and development. We must factor these trends into our policy development and delivery and ensure synergy in our implementation of all relevant instruments.

Madam President,

In the period ahead, Ireland will spare no effort in addressing the remaining humanitarian challenges facing affected communities and people caused by mines, cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war.