

Statement by the United States Delegation:
US Landmine Policy
December 1, 2009

The United States is pleased to attend the Ottawa Convention's Review Conference for the first time. We congratulate Colombia for hosting this important conference.

In 1997 the International Campaign to Ban Landmines gathered 855,000 signatures on a petition that eventually spurred the creation of the Ottawa Convention. This global social movement showed citizens taking responsibility for their fellow citizens and alerting all of us to the dangers posed by landmines.

Our acceptance of President Uribe's invitation affirms that the United States shares the humanitarian concerns of parties to the Ottawa Convention. The Administration is strongly committed to continued U.S. global leadership in eliminating the humanitarian risks posed by landmines.

No country does more to support humanitarian mine action in strong support of the Convention's goals, including in landmine clearance, mine risk education, and victim assistance. The United States has provided more than \$1.5 billion toward humanitarian mine action and removing explosive remnants of war in 47 countries.

The Administration's decision to attend this Review Conference is the result of an on-going comprehensive review of U.S. landmine policy initiated at the direction of President Obama.

This is the first comprehensive review since 2003. As such, it will take some time to complete, given that we must ensure that all factors are considered, including possible alternatives to ensure protection of U.S. troops and the civilians they protect around the world.

The Administration applauds the significant accomplishments to date by the Convention in addressing the harmful effects of indiscriminate landmines and is committed to a continued U.S. leadership role in humanitarian mine action.