

CHINA

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First Review Conference of the Ottawa Convention in Nairobi
3 December 2004,

Statement by Mr. LIU Jieyi
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Mr. President,

Please allow me, at the outset, to congratulate the States Parties on the success of the First Review Conference of the Ottawa Convention and commend the Kenyan Government for its leadership and excellent arrangements.

It has long been the pursuit of mankind to protect the weak and vulnerable, uphold human dignity and save human life. Humanitarianism is the central theme of many historic legal instruments, from the Lieber Code to the St. Petersburg Declaration, and from the Geneva Conventions to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, reflecting the advance of human civilization.

The Ottawa Convention concluded seven years ago represented yet another important international effort to address the acute problems for many countries caused by anti-personnel landmines (APLs). It opens a new page in the annals of international humanitarian law.

With the joint efforts of the States Parties and relevant international organizations as well as NGOs, significant and laudable progress has been made since the entry-into-force of the Convention in addressing the humanitarian concerns associated with APLs. The adoption of *the 2004 Nairobi Declaration: Towards a Mine-Free World and Nairobi Action Plan 2005-2009* will undoubtedly rally greater support to this objective.

Mr. President,

“People command first priority” is a philosophy deep rooted in Chinese history and culture. The Chinese Government gives primacy to humanitarian issues, basing its policies on the interests, sentiments and benefits of the people.

China fully appreciates and has actively supported international efforts in resolving humanitarian problems caused by landmines. We endorse the purposes and objectives of the Ottawa Convention and have made unremitting efforts to help mine-afflicted countries through various programs and practical ways. These efforts

are fully in line with the spirit enshrined in the Ottawa Convention.

First, upon accession to the Amended Landmine Protocol to the CCW, we have fulfilled our obligations in all aspects, thus effectively eliminating problems caused by landmines on our territory.

Secondly, we pursue a foreign policy of peace and follow a new security concept centered on mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and cooperation. In the regional context, we have strengthened good-neighborly relations and partnership with our neighbors. All this provides a solid basis for our mine-clearance assistance programs and commitments under international obligations.

Thirdly, we put in place a moratorium in 1996 on export of anti-personnel landmines in the context of the Amended Landmine Protocol to the CCW. We hereby reaffirm such a commitment.

Fourthly, in the 1990's, we carried out large-scale de-mining operations in areas along our border and basically eliminated landmine problems on our territory. This provided the local communities with a safe living and working environment. In addition, the Chinese military authorities have recently launched a new round of de-mining operation in areas where boarder demarcation is in progress.

Fifthly, since 1998, my Government has actively contributed to mine actions in around 10 countries in Asia and Africa by providing funds, de-mining equipments and training programs on de-mining technology.

In recent years, we have stepped up our cooperation with relevant institutions of the United Nation by joining the Mine Action Supporting Group and participating in the UN landmine policy review process. We are glad to have contributed to the course of international mine action and will continue to do so.

Earlier this year, the Chinese Government and the Australian Network of ICBL co-sponsored a Humanitarian Mine/UXO Clearance Technology and Cooperation Workshop in Kunming, China. The workshop was highly successful in promoting exchanges and cooperation between major donors and mine-affected countries.

Mr. President,

China for its part wishes to see the early eradication of casualties and damage inflicted by landmines so as to achieve the goal of human security. In this connection, both China and States Parties to the Ottawa Convention share the same objective. China closely follows the Ottawa process and has been enhancing exchanges and cooperation with States Parties to the Convention. We are positively considering the submission of a national report in line with the requirements set forth in Article 7 of the Convention. We stand ready to further expand our cooperation with the States Parties to the Convention, in order to contribute to the early elimination of landmine problems.

Thank you, Mr. President.