

*Check against delivery*



Statement to High Level Segment of the  
Second Review Conference of the Mine Ban Treaty

*Mr. Miguel Bermeo*  
Deputy Director, UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery  
on behalf of Ms. Helen Clark, Administrator, UNDP

Cartagena de Indias, 4 December 2009

Madam President, your Highnesses, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Friends,

It is my distinct pleasure to address you on behalf of the Administrator of UNDP, Madam Helen Clarke who extends her personal greetings to all of you and particular gratitude and appreciation to the Government of Colombia for hosting the Second Review Conference of the Landmine Convention in beautiful Cartagena de Indias. Mr. Vice President Santos Calderón, thank you for your gracious hospitality.

Every human being has the right to life, the right to shelter, adequate food, and the right to freedom of movement. Indeed, all people have the right to security and development and to live with dignity. Promoting human security, sustainable development and poverty reduction are at the core of UNDP's work. As we have heard repeatedly this week, there is no doubt that landmines and explosive remnants of war not only impede but also arrest and even undermine the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals.

In communities affected by landmines, cluster munitions and explosive remnants of war, parents have fear about the path their children take to school, farmers and traders worry how they will generate a livelihood if they are denied access to fields, forests and markets and women are concerned of how to safely return with water and firewood and how to sustain their households should they encounter a hidden mine.

Acknowledging the link between mine action and development is even more pressing when recognizing that many mine affected countries already struggle with poverty and that affected populations already live in marginalized areas, and thus, often are already vulnerable. The measure of our success is the impact our actions have on the lives and livelihoods of these communities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Discussions this week shed no doubt on the fact that, after more than a decade of focused action on the part of States Parties, civil society, the United Nations and other multi-lateral organizations—and indeed by all who have joined this movement, the world is closer to eliminating the threat posed by landmines and improving the lives of affected communities. With our goal in sight, we must collectively redouble our efforts to achieve a world free of mines.

But success will hinge on the sustainability of our collective efforts, and will require our maintained commitment. Continued funding support is critical to ensure that our investments will not be jeopardized. Sustained and predictable funding from both international and national sources will enable both affected states on the verge of completion, and also those requiring more time and efforts, to meet our common goal.

Sustainability and cost-effectiveness of our efforts will require, above all, strong national leadership. Such leadership needs to come from within, through the determination and commitment of affected states to steer the course in implementing the treaty's provisions; to clear mined areas, destroy stockpiles and enable life with dignity for survivors. We all have a part to play to support affected states to lead this course towards their own development.

In most mine-affected countries there are by now national structures, standards, laws and strategies, operational capacities and resource mobilization frameworks to help address the problem. But not all of these institutions have sufficient or sustainable capacity. Together, we have to ensure they have the resources and the capacity to meet the challenges ahead.

Building national mine action institutions promotes focused action and good governance and establishes a crucial space for government and civil society to discuss issues of mine contamination and its impact on local populations. These are valuable lessons to take forward in the broader efforts to reduce armed violence. Ultimately, it is the effect of indiscriminate force, and the use of indiscriminate weapons as well as the use of illicit weapons that threatens the protection of civilians, of their lives and livelihoods.

Excellencies,

Ten years ago we came together to witness the entry into force of the Antipersonnel Mine Ban Convention. The Convention has become a trademark for how joint resolve can effectively and successfully contribute to putting an end to the human suffering caused by inhuman and indiscriminate weapons. This Convention - as well as the mobilization of action that it generated - has served as an inspiration for renewed resolve to tackle yet another scourge which in record time led to the recent Convention on Cluster Munitions. We eagerly await this new Convention to quickly enter into force, recognizing that implementation of its provisions and compliance with its aims have already begun.

Mine action is a driver for development, and not an end in itself. Where mines and unexploded ordnance litter the ground, mine action must be an integral part of national and local development plans. This demonstrates political will and the commitment of national governments and represents an essential step towards ensuring that mine action contributes to our collective efforts in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. This is especially important as we approach the 2010 review of these endeavors.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Meeting the objectives of the Convention is an imperative for us all. The United Nations Development Programme remains fully committed to play its part in meeting this imperative. Ultimately, to reach the Millennium Development Goals, we must increase human security and ensure larger freedom - freedom from fear but also freedom from want.

Madame Chair, distinguished Guests, many thanks