



## BRAZIL

### **THIRTEENTH MEETING OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON THE PROHIBITION OF THE USE, STOCKPILING, PRODUCTION AND TRANSFER OF ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES AND ON THEIR DESTRUCTION**

Statement by Ambassador Antonio Guerreiro,

Permanent Representative of Brazil to the Conference on Disarmament

Geneva, 2 December 2013

Mr. President,

Let me begin by congratulating you on your nomination as President of the Fifteenth Meeting of States Parties to the Ottawa Convention. We are confident that under your able guidance and leadership, this meeting will be highly successful.

The Ottawa Convention represents a major step towards the elimination of a category of weapons which has caused great suffering in many regions of the world. Brazil is firmly committed to the goals of the Ottawa Convention. In 1996, we co-sponsored General Assembly Resolution 51/45 S, which urged all States to pursue an effective, legally-binding international agreement to ban the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel landmines. Brazil signed the Convention on the day it was opened for signature, in Ottawa, on December 3<sup>rd</sup> 1997. We completed the ratification process in April 1999.

Since then, Brazil has fully implemented the Convention. Brazil has never resorted to the use of anti-personnel mines. We are fortunate not to have mined areas within our territory nor next to our borders. We have destroyed our stockpiles in 2003. We strictly comply with the provisions of Article 7 regarding transparency measures. As our yearly reports reflect, the number of anti-personnel mines retained for training, under Article 3 of the Convention, has been consistently declining, with an average destruction rate of 1,000 mines per year. Currently, Brazilian Armed Forces retain 6.587 anti-personnel mines for training. A total of 1.326 mines were destroyed in 2012. The retention and subsequent utilization of these mines during training allow Brazilian Armed Forces to adequately engage in international demining activities.

Brazil attaches great importance to the issue of universalization. We welcome the recent accession to the Convention by Poland, on June 2013, as well as the fact that the Ottawa Convention has now entered into force for 161 States. Despite the progress made, the goal of universal participation remains elusive. In this regard, Brazil believes that States Parties should make every effort to stimulate ratifications and accessions of the main producers and possessors of anti-personnel mines still remaining outside the Convention. We also believe that the strengthening of the United Nations in demining activities is fundamental to promote universalization.

International cooperation is one of the main pillars of the Convention. We note that this Meeting will have to consider requests for extension of mine clearance deadlines that have been submitted by 7 States Parties. This seems to indicate that international cooperation should be strengthened, by means of technical cooperation or additional financial resources.

Brazil has been actively engaged in international demining activities. Brazilian Armed Forces maintain specialized teams trained in destruction, recovery and neutralization of explosives and unexploded ordnance. Over roughly two decades, these teams have been working in various humanitarian demining missions, particularly in Central and South America, as well as in Africa. Officers from the Brazilian Army and Navy have taken part in demining missions under the auspices of the United Nations (particularly UNAVEM III, in Angola) and of the Organization of American States (MARMINCA, in Central America; MARMINAS, in South America, and the Group of International Monitors, in Colombia).

In 2009, we started a new cooperation project with Benin, through its CPADD (Centre de Perfectionnement aux Actions post-conflituelles de Déminage et de Dépollution). The main objective of the initiative is to enable the Center to offer courses to Portuguese-Speaking countries in Africa. Brazilian Officers have been working in Benin on the adaptation and translation into Portuguese of instruction material. They have also worked as instructors in courses in Portuguese-speaking countries of the region. Brazil has helped train military and civilian officials from Angola, Benin, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique in humanitarian demining techniques.

In a rough estimate, the cooperation and assistance provided by Brazil over the last 17 years, only in terms of the costs of the officers allocated, would amount to some 19 million dollars, an average of 1.1 million a year. That does not include other expenses in mine action courses and seminars we provide to officers from Brazil and other countries.

Mr. President,

Let me assure you that my delegation stands ready to support you and your team towards a successful meeting. We look forward to a constructive discussion over the next four days. I thank you.