

Press Release



Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention welcomes its newest member: Tuvalu becomes the first state in four years to join the mine ban movement

Geneva, 23 September 2011 – Leaders of the movement to eradicate anti-personnel mines have welcomed the island nation of Tuvalu as the 157th state to join the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, or Ottawa Convention. Tuvalu’s accession was made official when it appeared in the United Nations Journal on 22 September.

With Tuvalu’s accession to the Convention, there is near universal acceptance of this landmark treaty in the Pacific. In the region, only the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia and Tonga have not yet ratified or acceded to the Convention. Tuvalu is the first State to have acceded to the Convention since another Pacific Island state – Palau – joined the Convention in November 2007. Tuvalu’s accession, however, likely will be followed soon by other nations. Finland, Poland and South Sudan have all indicated that they are taking steps to join the Convention.

“Tuvalu’s accession will help strengthen the international movement to eradicate anti-personnel mines and to assist the survivors,” said His Excellency Gazmend Turdiu, the senior Albanian diplomat who currently presides over the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. “Tuvalu’s accession demonstrates that all States – big and small, mine-affected and free from the scourge of anti-personnel mines – have a role to play in ending the suffering caused by these insidious weapons.”

“I am extremely grateful that Tuvalu has joined this important humanitarian cause,” said His Royal Highness Prince Mired Raad Al Hussein of Jordan. Prince Mired, in his capacity as Special Envoy on the Universalization of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, visited Tuvalu in August to encourage government leaders to accede to the Convention. “Tuvalu, like most of the international community, has recognised that this Convention contains the only real response to the problems caused by anti-personnel mines.”

“We are hopeful that Tuvalu’s accession will spur other states both in the Pacific and elsewhere to accept that anti-personnel mines must not be used by anyone anywhere, that all mined areas must be returned to safe use and that survivors must be assisted” said Kasia Derlicka, Director of the Nobel Peace Prize-laureate International Campaign to Ban Landmines.

Tuvalu participated for the first time in the work of the Convention in June 2011 in Geneva as an observer. “The international community again looks forward to the participation of Tuvalu, this time as a member of the Convention, at the Eleventh Meeting of the States Parties (11MSP) to take place in Phnom Penh from 27 November to 2 December 2011,” said His Excellency Prak Sokhonn, Minister attached to the Prime Minister of Cambodia and President of the upcoming international landmines conference in Cambodia.

AP Mine Ban Convention Implementation Support Unit

The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention

The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention was adopted in Oslo in 1997 and was opened for signature in Ottawa the same year; it entered into force in 1999.

There are now 157 States that have ratified or that have acceded to the Convention, 153 of them now no longer hold stocks; approximately 44.5 million stockpiled mines have been destroyed by the States Parties.

34 of 50 States that at one time manufactured anti-personnel mines are now bound by the Convention's ban on production. Most other parties have put in place moratoria on production and / or transfers of landmines.

Demining has resulted in millions of square metres of once dangerous land being released for normal human activity.

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