

Nairobi Summit on a Mine-Free World, 29 November – 3 December 2004: Proceedings

The Nairobi Summit on a Mine-Free World is the name given to the First Review Conference of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Antipersonnel Mines and on Their Destruction. The Convention seeks to end the suffering caused by antipersonnel mines -- by prohibiting their use, requiring the destruction of existing stockpiles, and obliging States to clear mined areas and assist victims. This landmark international legal instrument, which has been adopted by over 140 States, entered into force on 1 March 1999.

Article 12 of the Convention states that a Review Conference shall be convened by the Secretary-General of the United Nations five years after the entry into force of the Convention. The purpose of the Review Conference was to: review the operation and status of the Convention; consider the need for and the interval between further Meetings of the States Parties; take decisions on submissions of States Parties as provided for in Article 5; and, adopt, if necessary, conclusions related to the implementation of the Convention.

At September 2003 Fifth Meeting of the States Parties, it was agreed that the Convention's First Review Conference would be held at United Nations facilities in Nairobi from 29 November - 3 December 2004. In addition, the States Parties agreed to designate Ambassador Wolfgang Petritsch of Austria as President of the First Review Conference. The basis for these and other decisions was the report prepared by the President of the Fourth Meeting of the States Parties on the outcomes of consultations he was mandated to undertake.

:: Article 12 of the AP Mine Ban Convention

:: Report of the President of the Fourth Meeting of the States Parties with respect to Consultations on Preparations for the Convention's First Review Conference

The Nairobi Summit on a Mine-Free World was more than just another review of an international legal instrument. While the States Parties reviewed progress made to date, they equally identified challenges that remain -- which led to the adoption of a powerful action plan to overcome these challenges. Moreover, the States Parties called for participation at the highest possible level in the Nairobi Summit's high-level session, which will take place on 2-3 December 2004.

At the Nairobi Summit, for the first time since 1997, the international community gathered at a high political level to examine the humanitarian problems caused by anti-personnel mines and what is being done to address these problems. The Summit participants included: 5 Heads of States or Heads of Government, 6 Vice Presidents or Deputy Heads of Government, and 20 Ministers. Canada, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, and Somalia were represented by a Head of State or Head of Government. Cambodia, Colombia, Dem. Rep. of the Congo, Swaziland, Tajikistan, and Thailand were represented by a Deputy Head of State or Deputy Head of Government. President Karzai of Afghanistan delivered a taped video message to the Summit. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chad, Congo, Djibouti, France, Guinea Bissau, Lesotho, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sudan, Tanzania, and Zambia were represented by a Minister. Other high level participants included 1997 Nobel Peace Prize co-recipient, Jody Williams, 2003 Nobel Peace Prize recipient Shirin Ebadi, 2004 Nobel Peace Prize recipient, Wangari Maathai, Executive Director of UNICEF, Carol Bellamy, President of the ICRC, Jakob Kellenberger, Former President of the ICRC and current President of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, Cornelio Sommaruga, UN Secretary-General

Kofi Annan, who addressed the Summit via live video link. 135 States participated in the Nairobi Summit, including 110 member States of the 1997 Ottawa Convention banning anti-personnel mines and 25 States that have not yet joined the Convention. States not parties to the Convention that attended the Nairobi Summit were Bahrain, Brunei Darussalam, Bhutan, China, Cuba, Egypt, Finland, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Israel, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libya, Mongolia, Morocco, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Singapore Somalia, Sri Lanka, Ukraine and Vanuatu.

The Nairobi Summit featured the largest ever gathering of representatives of non-governmental organizations concerned about the global landmine problem. Over 350 NGO representatives from dozens of countries participated in the event. On the first day of the Nairobi Summit Ethiopia announced that it had become the 144th State to join the Convention. Positive signs of growing acceptance of the Convention were heard from other key States that have not yet joined the Convention, including China, Indonesia and Somalia.

Review

The conference examined an 80+page review of the operation and status of the Convention since it entered into force on 1 March 1999. The conference concluded that since it was adopted on 18 September 1997, the Convention's unique spirit of cooperation has been sustained, ensuring the Convention's rapid entry into force and over five successful years of implementation. This comprehensive review also contained a record of essential work that lies before the Convention's member States in ensuring that the Convention indeed lives up to its promise.

Nairobi Action Plan 2005-2009

To overcome challenges that remain, the Convention's member States adopted Ending the suffering caused by anti-personnel mines: Nairobi Action Plan 2005-2009, concluding inter alia that for the period 2005-2009:

- The pursuit of universal adherence to the Convention will remain an important object of cooperation among States Parties;
- They would ensure the expeditious and timely destruction of all stockpiled anti-personnel mines under their or jurisdiction or control;
- Successfully meeting deadlines for clearing mined areas will be the most significant challenge to be addressed during this period and will require intensive efforts by mine-affected States Parties and those in a position to assist them;
- Consistent with the Convention's vital promise to mine victims, the States parties will enhance care, rehabilitation and reintegration efforts;
- Fulfilling their obligations will require substantial political, financial and material commitments;
- Transparency and the effective information exchange will be crucial to fulfilling their obligations;
- They will continue to be guided by the knowledge that individually and collectively they are responsible for ensuring compliance with the Convention; and,
- Their implementation mechanisms will remain important, particularly as key means to implement the Nairobi Action Plan.

Nairobi Declaration

The conference adopted Towards a mine-free world: the 2004 Nairobi Declaration, emphasizing that this declaration contains the renewed commitment of the Convention's member States to achieving the goal of a world free of anti-personnel mines, in which there are no more new victims.

A symbolic copy of the 2004 Nairobi Declaration was signed by States participating in the Summit. The President of the Nairobi Summit, Ambassador Wolfgang Petritsch of Austria, presented this copy of the declaration to two Cambodian landmine survivors – Song Kosal and Tun Channaret – as representatives of the global public conscience. In making this presentation, Ambassador Petritsch stated that the role of the public conscience remains as important as ever in that civil society around the world must hold States true to the commitments that they have made through the Nairobi Declaration.

The conference adopted a Programme of meetings and related matters to facilitate implementation 2005-2009. In doing so, the conference took the following decisions:

(A) To hold annually until 2009 a Meeting of the States Parties to take place in the second half of the year, in Geneva or, when possible or appropriate, in a mine-affected country.

(B) To convene annually, until 2009, informal intersessional meetings of the Standing Committees to be held in Geneva in the first half of the year, for a duration of up to five days.

(C) As a general rule, however not excluding exceptions for specific reasons, to hold meetings of the Standing Committees in February / March and Meetings of the States Parties in September.

(D) To hold the Second Review Conference in the second half of the year 2009.

(E) In keeping with the States Parties' practice of being flexible and pragmatic in addressing changing circumstances, to review decisions regarding the 2005-2009 programme of meetings at each Meeting of the States Parties prior to the Second Review Conference.

With regard to the next meeting of the States Parties, the conference took the following decisions:

(A) The next Meeting of States Parties will be held in Croatia and take place 28 November to 2 December 2005.

(B) Meetings of the Standing Committees will take place during the week of 13-17 June 2005 with the length of individual meetings and their sequencing, and duration of the entire period meeting to be established by the Coordinating Committee.

(C) Consistent with the practice of past Meetings of the States Parties, the Coordinating Committee shall be chaired by the President elected by the Review Conference until the States Parties elect a subsequent President. The chair of the Coordinating Committee will continue the practice of keeping the States Parties apprised of the Coordinating Committee's functioning.

(D) The following States Parties shall serve as the Standing Committee Co-Chairs and Co-Rapporteurs until the end of the next Meeting of the States Parties:

- Mine Clearance, Mine Risk Education and Mine Action Technologies: Algeria and Sweden (Co-Chairs), Jordan and Slovenia (Co-Rapporteurs);
- Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Reintegration: Nicaragua and Norway (Co-Chairs), Afghanistan and Switzerland (Co-Rapporteurs);
- Stockpile Destruction: Bangladesh and Canada (Co-Chairs), Japan and the United Republic of Tanzania (Co- Rapporteurs);
- The General Status and Operation of the Convention: New Zealand and South Africa (Co-Chairs), Belgium and Guatemala (Co-Rapporteurs).