

essential support.”³³ In the other article, the program director of the Human Rights Watch Arms Project states that “perhaps the most objectionable aspect of the new protocol is that it is in many ways a promotion of the continued use of anti-personnel landmines.”³⁴

Rather than engaging in this rancorous debate, Canada is pursuing a two track action plan: encouraging global adherence to the strengthened Protocol II and coordinating international action to ban anti-personnel mines. On 17 January 1996, Canada declared a comprehensive unilateral moratorium on the production, export, and operational use of anti-personnel mines. It also sponsored a strategy meeting in Ottawa in early September to consider coordinated international action to ban anti-personnel mines.

Of the countries participating in the CCW protocol negotiations, China, although not alone in its opposition, may well be the most reluctant party. China initially resisted proposals for detectability of all anti-personnel mines and strict requirements for self-destruction and self-deactivation features on all anti-personnel mines not kept within marked and monitored areas. It eventually agreed to the technical parameters, but it insisted on a transition period of 25 years. (Russia had insisted on a 15-year period.) Economic motives clearly play a factor: China markets at least four types of anti-personnel mines, and its prices are among the cheapest in the world.

Since 1980, many of the civilian injuries and deaths related to anti-personnel mines have been the product of mines laid by terrorist groups and armed factions involved in civil wars and other internal conflicts. These sub-national entities have depended on large nations, principally Russia and China, for their supply of mines. It is for that reason that the two countries’ ratification of Protocol II is of paramount importance. However, Chinese representatives have been quoted as stating that they would “give up nukes before they’ll give up antipersonnel mines.”³⁵ Russian negotiators have claimed that the only public concern they hear about anti-personnel mines is from mothers anxious that their sons in the Army have the means to defend themselves. India and Pakistan apparently find the mines useful for purposes of border security. Non-signatories to Protocol II include Egypt, Iran, Iraq, North Korea, South Korea, Singapore, and Vietnam. Many states have refused to consider a total ban.

On a more hopeful note, the Organization of American States has recently passed a resolution urging the creation of a landmine-free zone in Latin America. Establishing such a

³³ Michael J. Matheson, “New Landmine Protocol Is Vital Step toward Ban,” Arms Control Today, July 1996, p. 10.

³⁴ Stephen D. Goose, “CCW States Fail to Stem Crisis; U.S. Policy Now an Obstacle,” Arms Control Today, July 1996, p. 17.

³⁵ Quoted by Tony Capaccio in “State Official Outlines China’s Opposition To Landmine Protocol,” Defense Week, 1 July 1996.