

While the momentum exists and all the signals are positive, there is still an enormous amount of work to be done in the coming months, especially in Asia, where support is the most limited. To date, fewer than a dozen Asian countries are on board - the Philippines, New Zealand, Malaysia, Cambodia, Nepal, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. Many others are potential supporters and NGOs are being counted on to help add their strength to this movement.

The Ottawa Process is entering a new and crucial phase. Although countries that share the goal of a ban on AP mines are being encouraged to join in the negotiations on the mine ban treaty in Oslo, it is recognized that there are some who will not yet be able to come forward.

This is unfortunate. But it is neither unexpected nor unprecedented. Some would prefer to negotiate within the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva where some important countries — Russia, China, India, Pakistan, who have chosen not to participate in the Ottawa Process — could be engaged. This too would be the preference were it possible. Regrettably, consensus in the CD on the issue of a comprehensive ban is long way off. The CD is a closed club of only 61 countries. Many of the countries most committed to a ban — from mine-affected states such as Angola and Cambodia to Ireland and Malaysia — are not members of the CD.

It is important to engage producers and exporters in this effort. Indeed, an interesting dynamic has developed: the momentum generated by the ban campaign has already had a fundamentally positive effect on the positions of several key producers. India and Pakistan have imposed or maintained comprehensive export moratoria. China has said that it has not exported AP mines since 1994 and Russia has a limited export moratoria in place. We hope that these countries can be convinced to permanently cease their AP mines exports.

Canada believes that we must continue to work in every available fora — from the CD to the ASEAN Regional Forum to the OSCE; the OAS to the Commonwealth and Francophonie — to universalize support for the Ottawa Treaty and to strengthen the norm it will establish.

Ultimately, governments must make their own calculation of the costs and benefits of AP mines. Canada recognizes that the decision to give up AP mines is not always a quick or easy one. In considering this issue, these countries are being encouraged to read the ICRC study undertaken by a group of distinguished former military officers in which they determine, after reviewing 26 armed conflicts, that:

- "even when used on a massive scale, [AP mines] have usually had little or no effect on the outcome of hostilities," and

- that AP mines have rarely been used "correctly" whether by developed armies, third world armies or insurgents.

The conclusion of the treaty in December, however, is only the first step.

An Ottawa AP mine ban treaty will establish a clear, new international legal norm against AP mines. It cannot be ignored. Even if there is not universal adherence to the treaty at the outset, as with every other treaty negotiated, it will have the effect of establishing not only a legal norm for those who sign it; but a moral and political restraint on production, transfer and — most importantly — use for those outside the regime.

Canada realizes that the Ottawa Treaty will not solve, overnight, the AP mine problem. It won't. But it will give the world a fighting chance to tackle the millions of mines already in the ground and the millions of people already victims. It will give the world the solid foundation upon which to argue and cajole and lobby,