

Mine Ban: Progress Report



Regular Report Provided by Canada on the Anti-personnel Mine Ban

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A Note from Minister Axworthy

It is with the greatest pleasure that I welcome you to Ottawa for the Treaty Signing Conference and Mine Action Forum. I truly feel that I am among friends. Not only are we witnesses to the historic signing of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on their Destruction; we have made history. Together, we have done nothing short of what was, only 14 months ago, considered impossible — we have ensured that a new international norm against ant-ipersonnel (AP) mines is permanently encoded in a legally binding treaty.

We have participated in a remarkable global effort. In October 1996, I issued a challenge to the world to return to Ottawa to sign an international treaty to ban mines by the end of 1997. Since then, we have criss-crossed the globe from Asia to Africa, the Americas and Europe. In the process, we have gained undeniable proof that this coalition of governments, NGOs, international institutions and civil society can set a global agenda and effect change.

The Nobel Committee has recognized this unique and dynamic effort by awarding the Nobel Peace Prize to the International Campaign to Ban Landmines and its co-ordinator, Jody Williams. The Committee's decision echoed the voices of people the world over that have clearly said, "Enough killing of innocent victims." No one embodied that plea more than our late colleague and friend, Diana, Princess of Wales. Her voice rose against all dissent to bring this issue to the world's attention. Nations heard our collective voice, and many have come to Ottawa to strike a solemn and permanent blow against AP mines.

From its inception, the Ottawa Process has been open, transparent and inclusive. New electronic technologies have enabled us to communicate with our global partners rapidly, inexpensively and across regional boundaries. This transmission of key campaign messages was crucial to our success. In commemorating this new "globalization," the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade has launched *Safe Lane*, a new Web site



Minister Lloyd Axworthy at Oslo NGO Forum, September 1997.

Photo: Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

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