

MEDIA ADVISORY

www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca

February 14, 2001

(12:40 p.m. EST)

No. 3

AFRICA-WIDE MEETING TO FOCUS ON ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN

A continent-wide meeting on the universalization and implementation of the Ottawa Convention banning landmines will take place February 15 and 16 in Bamako, Mali.

The Seminar on Universalization and Implementation of the Ottawa Convention in Africa was organized by Mali, with the support of Canada and France. It will focus on universalizing the Ottawa Convention banning anti-personnel mines and implementing its terms such as mine clearance, destruction of stockpiled mines and assistance to landmine survivors.

All African member states of the United Nations and a number of international organizations, African regional organizations, non-governmental organizations and donor countries have been invited to participate. The seminar will feature largely African expertise and experience and will aim to identify mine action needs in Africa and develop relevant action plans.

Africa is considered to be the world's most mine-affected continent. Since March 1999, anti-personnel mines have been used in more conflicts in Africa than in any other region.

Yet Africa continues to play a substantial role in establishing the Ottawa Convention as a new international humanitarian norm. Of the 53 African states, 31 have formally accepted the terms of the Ottawa Convention through ratification or accession, 12 have signed but not yet ratified the Convention, and 10 have neither signed nor ratified it as of yet.

Globally, 139 states have signed or acceded to the Ottawa Convention, with 110 states having formally accepted its terms through ratification or accession.

- 30 -



Government
of Canada

Gouvernement
du Canada

Canada