

Universalization of the Ban Treaty 1: Complementary Work in Other Global and Regional Fora

Chair: Dr. Thomas Hajnoczi, Austria

The Conference on Disarmament

Her Excellency Joëlle Bourgois
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to the Conference on Disarmament*

Delegates should not ignore those countries who have not agreed to sign the treaty banning anti-personnel mines, began Ambassador Joëlle Bourgois. A sizable number of states export and use anti-personnel mines. She noted that the Treaty must not become an obstacle to states wishing to use an easier route to finally accede to the Treaty. These "culprits" have been criticized sharply, Ambassador Bourgois said, but emphasized that those countries who will sign must convince those "who cannot immediately follow us" to take a step in the right direction. Signing and ratifying Protocol II of the CCW or pursuing initiatives in the Conference on Disarmament would advance the cause.

However, even though some of those countries causing problems may never sign, others may take small steps toward the Treaty requirements; this must be seen as a success. Other non-participating countries have "ideological differences" concerning the Treaty that also block consensus.

Importantly, consensus seems to be forming around prohibition on transfers. Even though this may seem like a modest improvement, Ambassador Bourgois explained, many countries participating in the signing of the Ottawa Treaty first began with a moratorium on transfers, and then moved to a ban on production and use.

For these non-participating countries, one modest measure would be to reduce production capacity by internally regulating the supply, use, and market for mines. Signatory countries could support public opinion and NGOs in countries where this influence is somewhat limited.



The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons

Mr. Hags Klingenberg
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The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons can play a limited role to universalize the Ottawa Treaty by using its annual meetings as a forum to convince those states not ready to ratify the Treaty to do so in the future, said Minister Hags Klingenberg.

The Convention membership has grown from 30 parties in 1980 to 60 states currently. A call for a total ban was issued at the 1995 Review session, where it was debated substantially, but put aside when it "quickly became clear" that such a far-reaching proposal for a total ban was not possible. Instead, long discussions were held on restrictions and prohibitions on anti-personnel mines, and consequently, there were major improvements over the first Protocol Two. New provisions included bans on the use of non-detectable anti-personnel mines, application to internal conflicts, new regulations for the use of self-destructing and self-neutralizing mines, prohibition on the transfer of prohibited and restricted anti-personnel mines, and new and important provisions for technical assistance to those states who need mine clearance, and for assistance to victims through the United Nations system.