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Dear Friends:

A few short months after the signature of the antipersonnel (AP) mine ban convention by 122 states, we are assembled once more in Ottawa to move the Mine Action Agenda forward. It is a privilege for Canada to play a role in the international coordination of Mine action efforts, of which this Workshop is a part. It is our belief that the optimal use of global Mine Action resources can be realized only through continuing, methodical cooperation and joint efforts.

The purpose of this Workshop has been to bring together senior officials of key partner countries to address three main issues:

- determining where greater international coordination could improve the effectiveness of global Mine Action and related efforts to ensure the implementation of the AP Mine Ban Convention in all of its aspects, including humanitarian mine clearance and victim assistance;
- identifying gaps and areas of duplication in the expanding international response to the mines crisis; and
- developing a broad framework to facilitate the ongoing prioritization and coordination of Mine Action activities.

Even before the Workshop, it was apparent that there was much work ahead on resource and implementation issues. We need to clarify the roles and bolster the capacities of those United Nations agencies which will have broad Mine Action responsibilities. Efficiency also demands coordination of the internal and external activities of donor countries, to increase our collective impact and eliminate waste or overlap.

Concerted efforts on global landmine data management are also essential. Distinguishing the responsibilities and areas of interest of different agencies and donors on mine data collection will permit the integration of databases and refinement of information, and will facilitate priority-setting. At the same time, the worldwide movement that brought us a ban convention must standardize and evaluate the quality of data



collection. The effectiveness and appropriateness of detection and surveying techniques must be examined, even as we develop codes of conduct and identify best practices.

Enclosed in this chair's summary are a series of tools designed to assist our efforts: a calendar of key treaty deadlines, an updated calendar for Mine Action and a synopsis of the proceedings of each of the four working groups. These synopses identify the challenges for Mine Action and areas requiring further coordination, and include agendas for action in each area. This is not a negotiated document, but a recapitulation of the main points we have identified from the discussions of the past two days.

I speak for all Canadians when I say that I applaud your efforts, welcome your commitment, and look forward enthusiastically to completing this journey with you.

Sincerely,

Lloyd Axworthy
Minister of Foreign Affairs

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