



EU

**NAIROBI SUMMIT ON A MINE-FREE WORLD
29 NOVEMBER to 3 DECEMBER 2004**

**Statement by Frank MAJOOR,
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of the Kingdom of the Netherlands,
on behalf of the European Union**

Nairobi, 2 December 2004

(Check against delivery)

NAIROBI SUMMIT ON A MINE-FREE WORLD
FIRST REVIEW CONFERENCE
OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION
ON THE PROHIBITION OF THE USE,
STOCKPILING, PRODUCTION AND
TRANSFER OF ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES
AND ON THEIR DESTRUCTION

Mr President,

I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of the European Union. The candidate countries Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey and Croatia*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Serbia and Montenegro, as well as the EFTA country, Liechtenstein, member of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

Mr President,

Let me start by commending the Austrian Presidency and Kenyan hosts of this conference for their excellent preparations, warm hospitality and effective leadership.

Mr President,

The Mine Ban Convention has achieved a great deal. As I cannot mention everything, I will limit myself to several highlights. There is now a sense of urgency throughout the world about the serious humanitarian threat which mines represent. Some 143 states, including almost all those affected, are parties to the Convention. The number of states officially trading in anti-personnel landmines has fallen from 34 to zero. The number of states where such mines are used has dropped from 19 in 1997 to five today. More than 37 million mines in stock have been destroyed. Large areas of mined land have been cleared. And, most important, the number of people killed or injured has been significantly reduced.

Mr President,

The Convention has also inspired the international community in related fields. As recently as last year, states party to the Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW) adopted a new protocol on explosive remnants of war. This legally binding instrument clearly has a humanitarian objective and is an important addition to the fabric of international law. Along with the Mine Ban Convention, it is another demonstration of the strong commitment to reinforcing provisions to protect civilian populations from the risks armed conflicts pose. This also applies to ongoing efforts coordinated by Finland within the CCW to address concerns about the irresponsible use of mines other than anti-personnel mines (MOTAPM).

Mr President,

We have much to be proud of but should not rest on our laurels. Landmines and other ordnance still kill or injure tens of thousands of innocent people each year. More than a million mines in fields and on roads represent a daunting obstacle to development.

Promoting and achieving universal acceptance of the Mine Ban Convention remains a priority, since states which are not parties to the Convention still retain enormous stocks of anti-personnel mines. The EU has made numerous démarches to urge these states to sign the Convention and to promote broad adherence to its principles.

I would also like to underscore the importance of regional cooperation as an essential factor in implementing the Convention. A regional approach builds confidence among the countries within the mine-affected regions and contributes to stabilising them. In addition, pooling resources, particularly for expensive technologies, helps to reduce the costs of mine action programmes.

Mr President,

The European Union has provided assistance to affected states and communities and will continue to do so. The efforts of the Union and its member states make the Union the largest contributor to global mine action – 183 million euros in 2003.

Individual EU member states will refer to their national contribution and policy in their own speeches. Speaking on behalf of the European Union, I would like to point to some of the main features of the European Community's strategy – in particular its strategy for 2005-

2007. With its interim target of zero victims, the strategy seeks to reduce the threat of landmines on the ground and in stockpiles by offering social, economic and medical assistance to local populations affected and to the victims of landmines. For the period 2005 to 2007, approximately 140 million euros will be made available. One of the criteria for the geographical focus of EC mine action is in fact commitment to the Mine Ban Convention.

Mr President,

Let me conclude by stressing the European Union's resolve to eliminate the landmine threat completely – by promoting universality, destroying stockpiles, clearing mines and assisting victims. We are working closely with the international community through governments, international organisations and NGOs. Let us continue our concerted action until the very last anti-personnel mine has been removed from the face of the earth and the target of zero landmine victims has been reached.

Thank you.

* Croatia continues to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
