

Royal highnesses, excellencies, dear colleagues,

Mr President

I would like to begin with thanking you and your team, as well as the ISU, for your hard work during the past year. It has been a very transparent and inclusive process.

Mr President

Sweden has its own history with regards to anti-personnel mines. We were active in the 1990s within the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons to put in place the Amended Protocol II on the Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices. For us it was key that the largest producers and users of mines were involved in the process. But anti-personnel mines weren't weapons that were used by great powers alone. They were, and still are, an everyman's weapon - and the consequences of their use was - and still is - horrific. It became increasingly clear that these weapons were indiscriminate and that they indeed couldn't be used in accordance with international humanitarian law.

In 1996, the Swedish parliament took the decision to ban the use of anti-personnel mines by the Swedish armed forces. This included the destruction of existing stockpiles. Sweden could thus join the other 121 States that signed the Convention in Ottawa in December 1997. We have always been proud of that decision.

Mr President,

Since Sweden joined the number of states that have taken the same decision have grown to 164. That number stands as a testament to the success of this convention. As we have reached this great height, we must however remain vigilant. Success can also be a breeding ground for complacency. And as we have seen in later years, non-state actors and their use of improvised anti-personnel mines pose a significant and increasing challenge. We welcome the fact that this is addressed in the Oslo Action Plan.

To continually strive for universalization is not only the right thing to do in order to rid ourselves of these weapons of terror once and for all, it is also a promise all of us have made during previous review conferences and until we have reached that goal it will remain one of the most important obligations we have in our continued efforts.

I thank you.