

Statement by Zambia on the draft Declaration for the 3rd review conference

Thank you Mr President for giving me the floor to comment on the draft declaration of states parties to the convention on the prohibition of the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of antipersonnel mines and on their destruction. May I once again congratulate you and your team for the admirable efforts you are putting in to prepare us for the third Review Conference. We are confident that the momentum that these documents are building will continue to the review conference.

Mr President Designate

Indeed fifteen years have passed since we gathered in Maputo to chart the way forward for the implementation of the Anti Mine Ban and the choice of Maputo for the third review conference is only a natural choice. In the last fifteen years considerable and encouraging progress has been made in the implementation of the convention, particularly in the clearance of contaminated land, stockpile destruction and assisting victims as records indicate. Thanks to the zeal of the civil society and concerted efforts of all states parties, the family of the anti mine ban convention has grown and even some of the biggest producers or users of this dangerous weapon have in the recent years shown restraint in its use as seen in the reduced number of reports of the use and casualties or deaths from landmines.

Mr. President.

In spite of the successes that we have scored in the last 15 years , we still haven't reached or achieved the main goal and objective of the Convention, that of achieving a total ban on the production, use and stockpiling of landmines. Recent reports of the use of landmines and casualties in some countries are a setback in our efforts to rid the world of landmines . My delegation believes that significant strides have been made by experts to achieve the objectives of the Convention and what remains is political will. The inclusion of a high level segment to the third review conference is therefore welcome as it will enable policy makers to be part of the deliberations and deliver the much needed political will. The policy makers need to be brought on board in order for them to appreciate the unacceptable harm that landmines cause to civilians, especially women and children. Their presence at the review conference could also help in the universalisation agenda which is a critical goal in the success of the convention.

Let me end by reiterating that you can count on Zambia's support. I thank you.