



**16th Meeting of States Parties to the
Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention**

**Statement by Katy Donnelly
Deputy Permanent Representative to the
Conference on Disarmament, Geneva**

Universalisation

21 December 2017

Thank you Mr President.

New Zealand is very pleased to join other delegations in welcoming the recent ratification of the Ottawa Convention by Sri Lanka, which now joins us as the 163rd State Party. We note the figures from the latest Landmine Monitor that show almost 60,000 anti-personnel mines were destroyed in Sri Lanka last year, and welcome the news that the first of Sri Lanka's mine-affected districts has been declared safe from landmines in 2017. We look forward to working with Sri Lanka as it strives to address the legacy of landmine use and to achieve its target of being "mine-impact free" by 2020.

We are thrilled, too, to have heard the announcement just now that the State of Palestine will shortly join the Convention and we look forward to formally welcoming it a State Party.

Mr President,

The recently released Landmine Monitor for 2017 provides a timely reminder of the urgency and importance of achieving universality for our Convention. The very high casualty rates from landmines and other unexploded ordinances are evidence that our work is far from done. Last year saw the highest number of victims since 1999, with over 8,000 victims in 56 States and other areas, and with available statistics showing that 78% of victims are civilians, of which 42% are children. New Zealand also regrets that the past year has seen new mine contamination, much of

which involves improvised mines, in both States Parties and non-States Parties to the Convention.

New Zealand continues to encourage all non-States Parties to the Convention to join as soon as possible. We will be taking the opportunity shortly to spread this message in the Pacific during a Conference we are hosting with the most welcome support of the Government of Australia, and sponsorship also from the Government of Vanuatu, in Auckland, New Zealand from 12 to 14 February 2018. That Conference will look at Pacific support for, and implementation of, key conventional weapons treaties, in particular the Arms Trade Treaty, but also focusing on the Cluster Munitions Convention and the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. At the same time, we look forward to continuing to promote our Convention more broadly to achieve its universality.

Thank you Mr Chair.

NZ disarmament statements online, www.converge.org.nz/pma/nzdist.htm