



**Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
Intersessional meetings: 8 -9 June 2017
Statement by Sri Lanka**

Mr. President,

Congratulations on your appointment as the President of this Intersessional Meeting. We appreciate your constructive engagement with the Sri Lanka delegation.

Mr. President,

Sri Lanka recognizes the human suffering caused by anti-personnel mines, and fully supports all global endeavors to overcome challenges associated with land mines. We note the remarkable progress made within the Convention, where 87 of those 90 States that had reported stockpiled anti-personnel mines have completed their stockpile destruction programmes, destroying over 51 million of stockpiled anti-personnel mines.

Although Sri Lanka is still not a State Party to this important Convention, we have supported the work of this Convention and continue to do so.

Since 1997, Sri Lanka has voted in favour of the United Nations General Assembly Resolution on the Convention, and attended the meetings of the Convention, including the MSP's, Inter-sessional meetings, and regional workshops, often with expert-level participation from capital. Sri Lanka has also submitted voluntary report under Article 7 of the Convention.

At the domestic level, the Government of Sri Lanka has made mine clearance a priority, along with creating mine risk awareness, in particular, given the importance of doing so in a post-conflict context for humanitarian reasons including the need to expedite resettlement of the displaced, and livelihood development in the former conflict affected areas in the country. Sri Lanka is deeply appreciative of the extremely generous assistance and

cooperation extended by donor countries, the UN as well as non-governmental organizations in these efforts. Our efforts, aided by the international community have succeeded in clearing 131 Km² of contaminated areas since 2002, and it is estimated that another 54 Km² of land remains to be cleared, 70% of which constitutes forest cover.

Mr. President,

The Cabinet of Ministers of Sri Lanka, in March 2016, approved Sri Lanka's accession to the Ottawa Convention, and we are presently working on domestic technical and other related processes required for Sri Lanka's accession.

We look forward to continued engagement with you, Mr. President, and other relevant bilateral partners and organisations in working towards this end.

Finally Mr. President,

While sincerely thanking and appreciating the assistance and support provided to Sri Lanka by international partners including the UN and donors, we request continued support, to successfully resolve the remaining challenges associated with land mines in my country.

We also wish you success on your tenure as the President, and for the preparations for the 16th Meeting of State Parties later this year.

Thank You.