Resolution on the 10th anniversary of the 1997 Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction

2007/2676(RSP) - 13/12/2007 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

Following the debate on 10 December 2007, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the 10th anniversary of the 1997 Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction. It urged all states to sign and ratify the Ottawa Convention in order to universalise the Convention so as to attain the common goal of a mine-free world. It is estimated that 78 countries still have some 250 million landmines stockpiled and 13 states not party to the Ottawa Convention still produce or retain the right to produce anti-personnel mines. Parliament underlined in particular the importance of the accession of USA, Russia, China, Pakistan and India to the Convention. It also encouraged the two EU Member States which have not yet acceded to the Convention or completed the ratification process to do so before the next Ottawa Convention Review Conference in 2009.

Parliament urged all armed non-state actors to show their respect for the humanitarian norm established by the Ottawa Convention by stopping the production and use of anti-personnel landmines and to sign the Geneva Call Deed of Commitment. It called on the Council and the EU Member States and candidate countries to start at once the preparation of the 2009 Ottawa Convention Review Conference and to make a proposal for planned joint action in this context. It encouraged all Member States, candidate countries and States Parties to the Ottawa Convention to pay close attention to the possible impact of the widely recognised opinion of the International Committee of the Red Cross that any mine which is likely to be detonated by the presence, proximity or contact of a person is an anti-personnel mine prohibited by the Convention. Specifically, this would mean that tripwires, break-wires, tilt-rods, low-pressure fuses, anti-handling devices and similar fuses would be prohibited for States Parties to the Convention.

Members called for the following :

- Member States and candidate countries must take immediate measures to ensure that anti-vehicle mines which are likely to be detonated by the presence, proximity or contact of a person are destroyed in accordance with the provisions of the Ottawa Convention;

- the Commission must maintain its continuity of effort to assist financially communities and individuals affected by landmines through all available instruments ;

- the Commission must reinstate a specific anti-personnel mine budget line for the financing of mine action, victim assistance, and stockpile destruction required of States Parties that cannot be funded through the new funding instruments, and also ensure that sufficient resources after 2007;

- the Commission must maintain sufficient staff posts to ensure the effective implementation of its policy on banning anti-personnel mines, including by ensuring that mine action is explicitly included in mine-affected States Parties' Country Strategy Papers and National Indicative Programmes;

- States Parties to the Convention, particularly EU Member States and candidate countries, must ensure that their funding for mine clearance contributes to the development of a national mine clearance capacity so as to ensure that mine clearance activities are continued until all areas containing mines are cleared;

- the Council and the Commission must continue to support the efforts to commit armed non-state actors to a landmine ban, which does not imply support for, or recognition of the legitimacy of, armed non-state actors or their activities;

- mine-affected countries and international donors must give greater priority to the physical and economic rehabilitation of survivors, as their needs are not being adequately addressed;

- Parliament competent committees must participate in CCW meetings, report on Member State initiatives on landmines and report on other international measures concerning such weapons;

- State Parties must ensure that they do not allow the financial institutions active on their territory and/or subject to their legislation to invest in companies involved in anti-personnel landmine production, stockpiling or transfers.

Lastly, Parliament called on the EU, the Member States and candidate countries to ban any kind of direct or indirect financial support by private or public financial institutions active on their territory and/or subject to their legislation to companies involved in the production, stockpiling or transfer of anti-personnel landmines. This ban should be incorporated in EU and national legislation.