



The Cartagena Summit on a Mine - Free World

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Seminar in Colombia paves the way for world's summit

Cartagena, Colombia, 13 October 2009 – THE Republic of Colombia, with the support of the European Union, has kicked off the *International Humanitarian Demining Seminar: Challenges to Development*, featuring a wide range of national and international experts. The goal of the seminar is to improve lives in mined-affected areas. The seminar, which concludes on 16 October, features presentations by representatives from Afghanistan, Australia, Cambodia, Colombia, Croatia, Jordan, Laos, Sri-Lanka, Sudan and the United Kingdom.

Colombia has shown leadership to its commitment to the implementation of the Convention by destroying existing stock and clearing all mined areas surrounding its military bases by 2010, however, challenges remain.

According to Andres Davila, Director of PAICMA the national coordination and monitoring authority for mine action in Colombia, “the country will have to request an extension to clear all known-mine fields as required by the Convention.” In addition, Davila said, “the Government still has to decide on whether or not to allow the implementation of humanitarian demining by civil-society organizations.”

The international seminar is a prelude to [The Cartagena Summit on a Mine-Free World](#), where 156 States will take stock of progress made and challenges remaining towards achieving a mine-free world. The Summit will be held in Cartagena from 29 November to 4 December 2009.

“We are together in a fight for humanity and against anti-personnel landmines,” said Norwegian Ambassador and *Summit President*, Susan Eckey addressing the seminar in Cartagena. “We are here to exchange our experiences and seek solutions.”

On the upcoming *Summit* Ambassador Eckey said, “in 50 days we will meet once again in Cartagena to agree on actions to ensure that all mined areas in Colombia and elsewhere are cleared, and to guarantee the assistance to survivors wherever they may be.”

Kerry Brinkert, Director of the Geneva-based Implementation Support Unit, which provides secretariat services to the Convention and its States Parties, also stressed the importance of the *Cartagena Summit*. “In 47 days Cartagena will become center stage for leaders of 156 nations to address the challenges that remain to rid the world of anti-personnel mines.”

The *Cartagena Summit* is the name given to the Second Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. The Convention bans anti-personnel mines and requires states that join to destroy all existing stocks, clear all mined areas and assist the survivors.

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