

## COUNTDOWN TO THE CARTAGENA SUMMIT ON A MINE-FREE WORLD

**Brussels**, 29 September 2009 - What difference has been made a decade after the entry in force of the Anti-Personnel (AP) Mine Ban Convention? What are the challenges that remain, and what are the opportunities that *The Cartagena Summit on a Mine-Free World* can offer? These are some of the questions addressed at a European Union-sponsored seminar that took place in Brussels on 28 September.

"While there is light at the end of the tunnel, much more work remains to clear mined areas and to assist the victims," said Kerry Brinkert, Director of the Implementation Support Unit of the AP Mine Ban Convention, and speaker at the seminar. "*The Cartagena Summit* is an opportunity for the European Union and the rest of the international community to reaffirm a shared commitment to a world without anti-personnel mines."

### Specific challenges remain

The International Campaign to Ban Landmines (**ICBL**) and the Mines Advisory Group also participated in the seminar and called for the European Commission to remain fully engaged in the effort to implement the Convention.

"The leadership of the European Union and European Commission has been impressive in the past, and the will to achieve a mine-free world remains. But the funding system in place is too complex," said Sylvie Brigot, ICBL Executive Director. "Meanwhile, mine-affected communities and mine survivors are still waiting for the support that would match their needs and the political promises." The ICBL called for EC and EU member states to arrive in Cartagena with concrete pledges of financial support for mine clearance and victim assistance.

### World leaders reaffirm their commitment to Cartagena

The Presidency of the European Union also took part in the seminar through the participation of Ambassador Lars-Erik Wingren of Sweden. "For over a decade the European Union has been unequivocal in its support for the implementation of the Convention," said Ambassador Wingren. "For the EU, mine action remains a key priority."

*The Cartagena Summit for a Mine-Free World*, which will take place in Cartagena, Colombia from 29 November to 4 December 2009, is the name that has been given to the AP Mine Ban Convention's Second Review Conference.