

Southern African Development Community, African Regional Bodies

Towards a Southern Africa Free of Anti-personnel Landmines: A Declaration

Legislation as at 8 September 1997

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Southern African Development Community

Towards a Southern Africa Free of Anti-personnel Landmines: A Declaration

[Published](#)

Commenced in full

[This is the version of this document at 8 September 1997.]

WE, the Heads of State or Government of the Southern African Development Community:

Recall that tens of thousands of freedom fighters were killed or maimed by landmines, during the struggle for independence, justice, peace and security in some of the Southern African countries;

Recognise that tens of thousands of innocent men, women and children are killed or maimed by landmines every year;

Commend the courage and commitment of the humanitarian deminers, who daily risk their lives to remove these deadly weapons from the soils of affected countries;

Take note of the urgent need for a comprehensive global ban of anti-personnel landmines and greatly expanded programmes for mine clearing and victim assistance;

Recognise that a comprehensive ban rests on the international Treaty banning the production and use of landmines and call for humanitarian clearing of landmines and assisting landmine victims;

Recognise the particular importance of this year as the international community moves towards the signing of a Treaty concerning the total ban of the use of anti-personnel mines in Ottawa, Canada, in December 1997;

Welcome the various initiatives taken by SAOC Governments to convene meetings to discuss a complete ban on anti-personnel landmines;

Recall the OAU Resolutions 1593 and 1628 of June 1995 and February 1996, respectively, urging African States to actively participate in matters concerning demining and to adopt a common position in relation to the call for a complete ban on the production, use, development, trade and stockpiling of anti-personnel landmines.

Acknowledge the final Declaration of the 4th International NGO Conference on landmines which was held in Maputo, Mozambique, in February 1997;

Appreciate the generous assistance being rendered to SADC by the European Union on the landmine clearing project, as well as other assistance rendered by the international Community to SADC countries on the same matter, on a bilateral basis;

Note the launch of new landmines campaigns in the SADC region, especially in Angola, Zambia, Zimbabwe and other countries in Africa, and worldwide;

Welcome the announcements by the Governments of South Africa and Mozambique of their intention to ban the use, production, development, trade and stockpiling of anti-personnel landmines;

Urge all SADC Member States:

To take unilateral steps to ban the use, production, trade and stockpiling of Anti-personnel Landmines in their territories;

To support landmine ban campaigns, especially by the general public and NGOs in their territories;

To implement the relevant UN Resolutions urging for a worldwide ban on the production and use of anti-personnel landmines;

To implement the various OAU Resolutions urging for a continent-wide ban on the production and use of anti-personnel landmines on the African Continent;

To publicly commit themselves to the objective of signing the international Treaty banning the production, trade and use of all anti-personnel landmines to be signed in December 1997;

To increase greatly resources for mine clearance from all mine infested areas in the affected SADC Countries;

To increase resources for assisting landmine victims.

IN WITNESS WHERE OF, We, the Heads of State or Government of the Southern African Development Community, HAVE SIGNED THIS DECLARATION.

DONE at Blantyre on this 8th day of September 1997, in two (2) original texts, in the English and Portuguese languages, both texts being equally authentic.