



GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA  
Office for Mine Action

## Activity Overview

### Conference on the occasion of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Ottawa Convention

#### CSE-A7-C-17

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**Dates** 16-18 October 2017

**Venue** Zagreb and Sisak, HR

**Background** The 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction, typically referred to as the “Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention” or “Mine Ban Treaty”, but most commonly known as the “Ottawa Convention”, is the international community’s comprehensive response to the humanitarian problems caused by anti-personnel mines, weapons that are inherently indiscriminate and that last for decades after conflicts have ended. The Ottawa Convention was also the first multilateral arms control/humanitarian disarmament instrument to include provisions to assist the victims of the weapons in question; in doing so, the Convention established a new and important norm.

As of 2017, 20 years after its adoption and signature, 162 countries have ratified or acceded to the Ottawa Convention. 30 countries out of the 61 States Parties that have reported mined areas, have reported that they are now considered as being mine-free. Moreover, of the 90 States Parties that reported stockpiled anti-personnel mines, 87 have completed their stockpile destruction programmes, with over 51 million mines destroyed.

The Conference will be co-organized by RACVIAC - Centre for Security Cooperation, Office for Mine Action of the Government of Croatia and the Canadian Embassy to Croatia, with the financial support of the Federal Republic of Germany, and it will be held in Zagreb and Sisak in the Republic of Croatia.

**Purpose & Objectives** The purpose of this Conference is to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Ottawa Convention by providing a forum for discussion on the status and progress since the Convention’s entry into force and its historical impact on the global humanitarian and security architecture.

One of the objectives is to examine the role and the importance of cooperation between governmental and non-governmental organizations in the development of an effective implementation Victim Assistance System.

Also, another objective is to discuss and evaluate the opportunities and challenges that fall within the scope of political commitment and expressed aspiration to meet the goal of “Land Mine-Free World by 2025”.

It also aims to define the needs of the SEE countries regarding support from outside the region while noting that the region of SEE has a particularly high level of adherence to the obligations and the norm of the Convention.

**Participants** The two day event will be directed at policy-practitioners and technical experts (representatives of governments and relevant regional and international organizations – diplomatic, military and civilian with relevant expertise) and will provide an opportunity for multilateral and open discussions on the progress achieved so far.

On the part of RACVIAC two participants will be invited from each of the following countries, respectively, one from the government side, and one from the Mine Action Center, dealing with Ottawa Convention implementation issues in their respective countries: Republic of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic of Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*, Montenegro and Republic of Serbia, and one from the Hellenic Republic, Romania and Republic of Turkey (each).

In addition, attendees from invited Associate Members and Observers may participate in the activity.

Other governmental organizations, agencies, international organizations and the donor's community dealing with the implementation of the Ottawa Convention may also participate in the Conference.

**Methodology** The activity will last two working days and it will consist of a theoretical and practical part. The first part will take place in the format of a Conference, while the second part will be a field visit to an actual demining work site in the Sisak-Moslavina County followed by a presentation about humanitarian demining in the Croatian Mine Action Centre HQ in Sisak. It will give national and international experts, representatives of governmental and non-governmental organizations an opportunity to share their experiences and jointly address the challenges concerning the implementation of the Ottawa Convention as well as the future steps to achieve the main goal - 'Mine-Free World by 2025'.

The working language will be English.

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\* Turkey recognizes the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.