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Cancillería
Misión Permanente de Colombia
ante la ONU en Nueva York

**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Colombia
to the United Nations
Ambassador Guillermo Fernández de Soto**

Symposium “Safe Ground, Safe Steps, Safe Home”

New York, April 4, 2022

3,9 minutes

Madam Under-Secretary General Melissa Fleming
His Royal Highness Prince Mired Raad Zeid Al-Hussein
Your Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen

I appreciate the invitation to Colombia to participate in this event to commemorate the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action.

Colombia is deeply committed to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. In 1997 we signed the Convention. As Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia from 1998 to 2002, I had the privilege of leading the internal process of internal approval of the Convention and its ratification in September 2000. Also, I celebrated the international achievement of its entry into force in 2001.



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As State Party for more than two decades, we have advocated for its implementation and universalization and worked to guarantee national ownership and the effective development of our mine action system.

This commitment has been translated into an active participation in the machinery of the Convention and this year in the Presidency of the 20th Meeting of States Parties by my dear colleague, Ambassador Alicia Arango, Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations Office in Geneva who joins us today and who is working very hard for the strengthening of this instrument.

As Colombia, we are aware of the impact that these weapons have on people's lives, communities, and sustainable development. For this reason, the national government prioritizes the Comprehensive Action against Antipersonnel Mines, incorporated in the National Development Plan 2018-2022.

We have worked on the implementation of programs for survey and clearance of territories, comprehensive victim assistance and the strengthening of mine risk education activities.

I would like to share with you the significant progress my country has achieved in compliance with the obligations established in the Convention.



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470 municipalities have been declared free of mines, 201 of them during the current administration.

Likewise, humanitarian demining operations are being carried out in 108 municipalities.

To date, more than 31,000 prevention activities have been developed, reaching 656,543 beneficiaries.

In 2021 alone, and despite the pandemic, nearly 9,683 activities were carried out with 93,000 beneficiaries. So far in 2022, more than 30,000 children have benefited.

I would like to conclude by reaffirming Colombia's commitment to the effective implementation of the Convention and its universalization. Also, Colombia would continue promoting universal observance of the Convention's norms and objectives, condemn violations of these norms and take appropriate steps to end the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel mines by any actor, including by armed non-State actors.

We thank our partner countries and friends, the UNMAS, the Implementation Support Unit, the OAS, and the organizations that have accompanied and supported us in the development and strengthening of our mine action architecture. We would continue working until we



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achieve our common goals of a mine-free world and the full and equal inclusion of survivors and victims.

I leave you with a short video illustrating the work we are doing.

Many thanks.