

landmine action week



Letter to your MP

Write a letter to your local MP voicing your concerns about the continuing problem of anti-personnel mines and remind her/him of the UK government's obligations under the Ottawa Treaty. Request that s/he raise the issue in the House of Commons to ensure that landmines remain on the political agenda. Use the sample letter below as a guide.

Please send during Landmine Action Week 1-7 November 2004

Dear [Your MP]

I am writing to express my concern at the continuing threat of anti-personnel landmines to the lives and livelihoods of people in developing countries around the world, and to ask you to keep this issue on the political agenda by raising it in the House of Commons.

As you are aware, the Ottawa Treaty, effectively banning anti-personnel landmines has now been in effect for five years, and the first review conference is due to be held at the end of this year in Nairobi, Kenya. Being a State Party to the treaty, the UK government has an obligation not only to clear all mines in its territory and destroy stockpiles but also to assist other countries in victim assistance and mine clearance.

States Parties to the Ottawa Treaty have a ten-year deadline to clear mines, therefore 2009 is the deadline for countries that joined the treaty at its entering into force in 1999. Such countries include Cambodia, Mozambique and Bosnia. Without an increase in funding many mine-affected countries will be unable to meet this deadline. Funding must also be channelled more effectively – directly to mine action operators working with communities in mine-affected areas.

This is not just a problem for the developing world – it is our problem too. The UK has not met its own obligation to clear landmines in the Falklands – in fact clearance has not even started. The UK deadline is also 2009.

I therefore urge you to:

- push for increased and better-channelled UK funding for mine clearance over the next five years.
- find out when the UK will begin to clear landmines in the Falklands, so that our country may set an example to others.

I urge you to help ensure that the UK respects its legal obligations under the Ottawa Treaty in the struggle for a mine-free world.

Sincerely
[Your name]

If you would like more information about the problem of anti-personnel landmines please contact:
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