



Committee on International Justice and Peace

3211 FOURTH STREET NE • WASHINGTON DC 20017-1194 • 202-541-3160

WEBSITE: WWW.USCCB.ORG/JPHD • FAX 202-541-3339

May 18, 2010

The Honorable Hillary Clinton
Secretary of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Madam Secretary:

A letter signed by 68 Senators is being delivered to President Barack Obama this week, asking that the U.S. accede to the Convention on the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and Their Destruction, otherwise known as the Mine Ban Treaty.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops fully supports having the United States sign and ratify the Mine Ban Treaty. The Catholic Church, within this country and around the world, has long called for a ban on landmines on moral grounds since they are indiscriminate weapons that continue to kill and maim innocent civilians long after conflicts have ended. In countries such as Laos, Angola, Colombia, and Lebanon, unexploded ordinances put in place years ago still cause death and injury to farmers trying to cultivate their land. In a message to the Second Review Conference of the Mine Ban Treaty which took place in Cartagena, Colombia in December 2009, the Holy See appealed to all states “to recognize the deplorable humanitarian consequences of anti-personnel mines,” saying that the damage caused to civilians was “greater than what was necessary to protect the States.”

In addition, from a practical standpoint, the civilian casualties caused by landmines breed anger and resentment and undermine support for U.S. military operations overseas. While the U.S. has been a leader in funding landmine clearing operations, it is time for our country to demonstrate its commitment to ridding the world of these weapons which cause long-term, irreparable humanitarian problems.

Sincerely yours,

Most Reverend Howard J. Hubbard
Bishop of Albany
Chairman, Committee on International Justice and Peace



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The Honorable Robert M. Gates
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000

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