



Statement on the Prayerful Recognition  
of the  
Ottawa Convention Treaty to Ban Land Mines

February 18, 1999

THE COUNCIL OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS OF METROPOLITAN CHICAGO, aware that between 60 and 80 million land mines are currently deployed in some 70 different countries around the world, and that

Each year as many as 26,000 people are killed or injured by the accidental explosion of these mines, and that eighty percent of those killed or injured are civilians, many of them children;

AND AWARE, ALSO, THAT an international convention prohibiting the use, stockpiling and transfer of these anti-personnel mines in the future, known commonly as the "Ottawa Treaty," becomes international law on March 1, 1999, and that

This Treaty has been signed by more than 130 countries and already ratified by the governments of 60 of these countries and that most countries have demonstrated a willingness to restrict exports of these mines, and that

While not yet a signer of the Treaty, the U.S. has agreed to join the other signatories by the year 2006 if effective land mine alternatives are found;

THEREFORE, the Council of Religious Leaders of Metropolitan Chicago unites in encouraging the members of our several faith communities to participate in a Weekend of Prayer -- March 12 through 14 -- in their respective places of worship, joining with the larger community of faith and goodwill in grateful and prayerful observance of the inauguration of the Ottawa Treaty, and

Urges our own government to continue supporting the effort to both ban the use of anti-personnel mines and remove those that are already in place, and seek ways to include our own country among the Treaty's signatories, and

Commends all those who work for peace, that God's will may be done and all God's children may live in safety.