

In addition to taking direct action through hosting a dinner, this advocacy letter can be sent to your local MP and/or the following at your discretion:

Ministers with responsibility for the Landmine Fund:

Hon. Peter MacKay Minister of Foreign Affairs	Hon. Gordon O'Connor Minister of National Defence
Hon. Josée Verner Minister of International Cooperation	There are no postal charges for letters addressed to: House of Commons Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

Dear :

Throughout the 1990s, the United Church joined with other organisations and individuals across Canada advocating for a landmine-free world. The Ottawa Treaty signed in 1997, and then ratified in 1999, was a tremendous stepping stone in pursuit of this goal. We were proud that the Government of Canada provided international leadership in achieving this agreement.

We supported the allocation of \$100 million in December 1997 by the previous Government, to go toward assisting signatory governments to meet their international obligations, to fund research through the Canadian Centre for Mine Action Technologies (CCMAT), to support various mine action organisations, and to advocate for the Treaty. We were, however, concerned when this fund was renewed in November 2002 with a reduced allocation of \$72 million and a sunset date of March 2007.

Today, despite recent statements from the Government that they remain fully committed to the universalization and implementation of the Ottawa Convention, they have made no funding announcement to support this policy. Initially promising efforts to 'mainstream' landmine funds within CIDA appear to have stalled. CCMAT is moving toward closing its doors by March 07. It appears that diplomatic efforts by the Government of Canada are winding down. As a result, other governments, some of whom have not even signed the Ottawa Treaty, have taken over the international leadership role once held by Canada.

In addition, Article 7 of the Ottawa Treaty requires State Parties to 'destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction and control as soon as possible, but no later than ten years after ratifying the Treaty'. It is ironic that the special purpose fund established by the Government of Canada expires at the end of March 2007 - two years before the first set of countries are expected to meet the international obligations that we encouraged them to take on. These countries need our ongoing support and encouragement.

Therefore, the United Church in Canada, in collaboration with the Canadian Landmine Foundation, calls on the Government of Canada to re-establish its leadership role and renew its financial commitment to all aspects of the implementation of the Ottawa Convention for at least a further two years.

Sincerely,