



Office of the
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MCKINNON SAYS LANDMINE CAMPAIGN MUST BE 'CREDIBLE'.

Foreign Minister Don McKinnon said today that New Zealand intends to remain in the forefront of the campaign to abolish landmines but says the campaign has got to be credible.

"We want to see landmines abolished but, realistically, this can only be achieved in a series of steps", Mr McKinnon said. "Any campaign which doesn't recognise this is only promoting a wish-list".

The Foreign Minister was responding to a Foreign Affairs and Defence Select Committee briefing by the Campaign Against Landmines, which is seeking a worldwide ban on the production, trade, stockpiling and use of anti-personnel mines.

"I believe that progress on this issue can only occur in stages. What we have to do first is toughen up the provisions of the Inhumane Weapons Convention, which would impose more limits on the use and transfer of these appalling weapons. It would also be very helpful if all those the nations that make landmines observed the voluntary moratorium on their export", Mr McKinnon said.

The Foreign Minister said New Zealand had shown its strong opposition to landmines with statements made in New York last year condemning their use.

"Without question we are opposed to landmines. We have backed that opposition with a commitment to anti-mining programmes in Cambodia, Bosnia, and Mozambique. But we also realise that to make progress there has to be agreement. A credible solution has to be a workable solution, and sometimes that only comes about by degrees and not by bold initiatives that fall on deaf ears", Mr McKinnon concluded.

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