



ICRC

Fourth Review Conference of the States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention

Oslo, 25-29 November 2019

International Committee of the Red Cross

Statement on universalization

Thank you, Mr. President.

First, on behalf of the ICRC, let me thank you Mr. President for your leadership and commitment to promote universal adherence to the Convention. Our thanks also go to the Convention's Special Envoys his royal highness Prince Mired of Jordan and her royal highness Princess Astrid of Belgium for their relentless efforts in promoting the Convention's universalization over the years.

The ICRC congratulates **Oman, Sri Lanka and the State of Palestine** for having joined the Convention since the Third Review Conference in 2014, bringing the number of States Parties to 164. While we celebrate the fact that over three quarters of States are party to the Convention, we also note that there have been no new States Parties in the last two years, underscoring the challenges that remain to achieving universal adherence to the treaty. Anti-personnel mines continue to endanger the lives and limbs of people in many contexts today, and we urge all States that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to the Convention without delay.

For each of the last four years, the Landmine Monitor has recorded high numbers of casualties from mines and ERW, with close to 6,900 in 2018, a large majority of whom were civilians. One of the reasons for this high number of civilian casualties is the new use of anti-personnel mines, including those of an improvised nature. It is therefore crucial to continue to promote **the universal observance of the Convention's norms and objectives by all actors**, including armed non-State actors. This necessarily requires efforts to access and engage in dialogue with these actors. We therefore welcome that the draft Action Plan contains such a commitment in Action 12.

The ICRC continues to promote universalization of the Convention and understanding of its obligations in a number of countries and contexts, where we also work with National Red Cross and Red Crescent

Societies towards this goal. The ICRC also provides legal assistance to States in developing national implementing legislation.

Anti-Personnel mines were among the topics discussed at various national and regional seminars on international humanitarian law (IHL) organized by the ICRC.

- A **Regional Seminar on Landmines, Cluster Munitions and Explosive Remnants of War** took place in Vientiane in April 2019, co-hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lao DPR and the ICRC with the support of Norway, with the participation of seven South-East Asian States.
- The APMBC was also presented at two regional meetings on weapons and IHL held respectively in **Jakarta for South-East Asian States** (September 2018) and in **Kigali for Commonwealth States** (June 2019).
- Four national workshops were also held respectively in Ethiopia (February 2018), Angola (July 2018), Sri Lanka (January 2019) and Mongolia (February 2019).

Mr. President,

Allow me to draw your attention to the upcoming **33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent** which will take place from 10 to 12 December in Geneva. It is a unique forum bringing together the world's largest humanitarian network and nearly every government to enhance and inspire humanitarian debates among governments, policy makers and the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Attendance by all your governments and National Red Cross or Red Crescent Societies is anticipated. The Conference will include reports on pledges made by States Parties to the APMBC to work to achieve a world free of AP mines and to promote universal adherence – particularly from Austria, Belgium, Canada, Finland and the Czech Republic – whom we commend.

To conclude, this Review Conference offers a critical opportunity to increase momentum to promote universal adherence. This must remain a priority and shall only be possible with the continued efforts and support of all States Parties.

Thank you.