



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 mine clearance and risk education and reduction**

Thank you Mr. President.

On behalf of the ICRC, let me begin by congratulating **Algeria, Burundi, Mauritania, Montenegro** and **Mozambique** for having declared completion of their mine clearance obligations since the Third Review Conference, bringing us closer to a mine-free world and giving us much reason to celebrate.

Indeed, we celebrate that approximately half of the 63 States Parties that reported obligations under Article 5 have declared completion. But it is also deeply worrisome that 32 States Parties remain contaminated by anti-personnel mines, and many of them are **not on track to meet clearance deadlines**, according to the reports of the Landmine Monitor and the Mine Action Review.

The ICRC, as many others, is concerned about what appears to be **a pattern of delays** in meeting Article 5 clearance deadlines, in view of the large number of extension requests over the years, including some States Parties making multiple extension requests. Twenty years after the Convention's entry into force, this is an unsatisfactory situation and one that calls for **urgent, concerted action** by affected States, and States Parties and organizations in a position to assist them, to put an end to this pattern.

The ICRC commends the very good work done by the Committee on Article 5 implementation, which has actively worked with mine-affected States with outstanding Article 5 obligations to ensure progress, and we appreciate the approach taken in the draft Oslo Action Plan with a view to improving the implementation of Article 5.

Mr. President,

The ICRC is very pleased to see that the draft Action Plan addresses the issue of **increased use of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature** – “IEDs” - and their humanitarian consequences. In particular, we welcome the commitment of affected States Parties, in Action 21, to apply all obligations of the Convention to contamination by all types of anti-personnel mines, be they industrially manufactured or of an improvised nature. In this regard, States Parties may wish to consult the ICRC’s Working Paper submitted to the Review Conference (WP.23), “Views and recommendations on improvised explosive devices falling within the scope of the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention”, available in English, French, Spanish and Arabic (on the conference website and at the desk outside this conference room.) We thank States, international and civil society organizations for inputs provided to this paper.

The ICRC also welcomes the inclusion of a new section dedicated to **mine risk education and reduction** in the draft Oslo Action Plan, in view of the critical importance these activities play in protecting civilians from the risks posed by anti-personnel mines pending completion of mine clearance. Of particular importance is the commitment of mine-affected State Parties to include detailed, multi-year plans for mine risk education and risk reduction for affected communities as part of any extension request.

In this regard, the ICRC, in collaboration with the Norwegian Red Cross Society, has developed **an enhanced approach for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement** to help communities mitigate the dangers from mines and ERW and increase their resilience in weapon contaminated environments. This approach, which we refer to as “**Risk Awareness and Safer Behaviour**” (RASB), includes guidance on risk identification and assessment, developing appropriate risk awareness messages, facilitating safer behaviour and the monitoring and evaluation of risk, among other measures.

In conclusion Mr President, faithful implementation of the Oslo Action Plan’s **mine risk education and reduction** and **mine clearance** commitments will be critical to facilitating the faithful implementation of States Parties’ obligations under Article 5, strengthening the protection of civilians in affected communities and bringing us closer to fulfilling the Convention’s promise of a world free of anti-personnel mines.

Thank you.