

ICBL Opening Statement to the 10th Meeting of the States Parties

29 November 2010

Mr. President, colleagues!

Today I take great pride in representing the ICBL, which was so instrumental in getting the Mine Ban Treaty in place and has been an integral part of the successful implementation of its obligations. In my statement I will touch upon the ICBL's main messages for this meeting and the years ahead, but also reflect briefly on my own experiences dealing with Explosive Remnants of War and mine action for more than 20 years.

One year ago, many of us were in Cartagena for the Mine Ban Treaty's Second Review Conference. The **Cartagena Summit on a Mine-Free World was a remarkable event** that allowed us to look back with satisfaction on progress made in the preceding five years and to celebrate the power of a treaty that has inspired so much dedicated effort year after year. At the same time, the Review **Conference was a forward-looking event that clearly recognized the significant amount of work** that remains to be done. The ICBL was happy to see States Parties pledging their continued commitment to ridding the world of landmines "in our lifetime" through the Cartagena Declaration, and laying out a **set of concrete steps for States Parties** to pursue that goal in the **Cartagena Action Plan**.

The 10MSP will be the first formal occasion **to measure how States Parties are living up to the promising words of Cartagena**. In particular, **we hope to hear news this week on several important topics that will be central to the implementation of the treaty over the next few years**; including when remaining stockpiles will be destroyed; how states are progressing in gaining a clear picture of remaining landmine contamination and planning for its efficient clearance; what steps are being taken to implement national victim assistance plans and to involve survivors in designing, carrying out, and monitoring such work; and where international cooperation and assistance is still needed to support implementation efficiently and effectively. We hope to at long last hear concrete progress taken by states not party to the treaty towards joining in the near future. We also hope that this week continues to show the value of partnerships that make the best use of the capacity and added value of each stakeholder in order to make continued progress on the treaty!

The 10MSP will also be a chance to measure something less tangible but equally important: namely whether States Parties still have **the same high levels of enthusiasm and motivation that have been associated with the Mine Ban Treaty since its inception**. The ICBL calls on States Parties **to keep up the commitment, keep up the compassion, and keep up the energy!** With this in mind, at the end of this morning's session we will be giving all delegates a gift to boost your energy this week!

From a more personal perspective I have a few additional comments. It is easy to become cynical when you work on an issue like this for a long time, and you grind through the day to day organizational work that we all have to deal

with on a regular basis. But it is remarkable to stand here, almost 20 years since I started in this industry, and think about all we have achieved, all the lives we have saved, all the food that is produced on previously affected land, and all the children that now can play games on what was formerly landmine affected fields and playgrounds. We have done this together, and though we have had an incredibly steep learning curve doing so, compared to most other comparable areas of aid and assistance, the landmine sector has been a tremendous success.

But we cannot allow ourselves to celebrate our victories without focusing on the next steps. All our work so far will have less value if we do not see this through in an efficient manner. In my opinion, we are at a point in the history of this treaty where we are “good enough” to complete the work on most of the obligations. *This is important*; we *have* developed the tools we need, we *have* the experience and capacity, we *are* good enough! Funding and energy should therefore be spent on speeding up implementation and completion!

Having said that, we should allow for critical voices to challenge us, especially in the areas of efficient and effective use of resources, globally and in the field, and we should challenge each other. This treaty has a great history in terms of developing and improving constantly, and this is not the time to stop doing that. Therefore I would like to challenge each one of you to commit to do as much as you all have done so far, to push beyond and to not rest on your laurels until the job is done!

After 20 years I am still committed to ridding the world of anti-personnel landmines, I hope you all are too!