

**12th Meeting of the States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty
ICBL Statement on Newly Discovered Mined Areas
4 December 2012**



Thank you Mr. President.

The ICBL finds it unfortunate that some states are finding new mined areas – confirmed or suspected – over ten years after they have joined the convention. Such situations were not foreseen by the treaty drafters, who surely imagined that ten years were sufficient to identify any mined areas.

That said, we appreciate the spirit of transparency behind such states' reports of new discoveries. The proposed decision to handle such cases is a healthy sign of the treaty's continuing collaborative and innovative approach to problem-solving.

With this in mind, the ICBL fully supports the draft decision, and we would like to thank the Co-Chairs for their work on the issue. The draft decision centers around two principles. First, bringing states back into line with Article 5 requirements; and second, encouraging rapid survey and/or clearance of the newly discovered areas. We especially welcome the requirement that requests for extensions under this procedure should be for the shortest time period possible.

Finally Mr. President, while we are pleased to see a 10-year maximum for extension requests under this procedure, the decision unfortunately leaves ambiguous when the starting point for this 10-year period would be. Our view is that since the state will be asking for an "extension" of its deadline, it is logical that the period of the extension would begin with the expiry of the original (or already extended) deadline. Ultimately, however, we hope this point will be moot and that any state finding itself in this position will be able to clear the land in far less than 10 years.

Thank you.