

**Notes for ICRC Intervention on Universalization  
12<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties to the Mine Ban Convention  
Geneva, 6 December 2012**

First of all, let me express our delight with **Poland's** announcement that its ratification of the Convention is imminent. Having all European Union States finally on board is certainly a cause for great celebration, and we hope that all NATO States will also soon be States Parties, with accession by the **United States** in the near future.

The ICRC would like to congratulate **Somalia** on its accession to the Convention in April this year. We commend Somalia's determination to renounce the use of anti-personnel mines and to mitigate their humanitarian impact, notwithstanding the complex security and economic situation in the country.

The ICRC warmly welcomes the efforts of all States not yet party, which have shown interest in the Convention or have announced their intention to study the possibility of accession. The steps being taken by **Palestine**, the **Lao PDR** and **Myanmar** are especially encouraging. We call upon all States not yet party that are present at this Meeting to take the message back to their capitals that taking a decision to join the Mine Ban Convention would constitute an important step for humanity, and should not be delayed any longer.

For the ICRC, the universalization of this Convention remains a priority. We continue to raise this issue with States not Party at every possible opportunity. The ICRC President is personally committed to this cause and has recently engaged the Foreign Minister of the Sultanate of Oman in this regard.

The ICRC was alarmed to hear that anti-personnel landmines may have been used in the course of the armed conflict in **Syria**. We are also deeply concerned by the continued use of anti-personnel landmines by **non-state actors** in a number of other contexts. We urge all States Parties and other actors to seize every opportunity to keep promoting the Convention and its provisions at the highest level, with a view to putting an end to the use of these horrific weapons by any actor, anywhere.

We take this opportunity to express our special gratitude to the Belgian Government as the current Chair of the Universalization Contact Group and Prince Mired Al Hussein of Jordan, Special Envoy for the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, as well as the ICBL for their relentless work towards the universalisation of the Convention. We also wish to acknowledge the important contribution of the European Union, including through various concrete projects with the ISU.

With several new States Parties in recent years, new life has been breathed into this Convention. The challenge now is to keep up the momentum, which will require the efforts of all of us.