



"Developing resilience – a response to the humanitarian problem of landmines"

Fourteenth Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction
(Geneva, 30 November – 4 December 2015)

Agenda item 2.d) on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance

Statement by

Dr Phoebe Wynn-Pope

Director, International Humanitarian Law and Movement Relations, Australian Red Cross

On behalf of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Check against delivery

Mr President,

On behalf of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (the International Federation) I congratulate you on your election as President of this Fourteenth Meeting of States Parties.

This Meeting of State Parties, following the third review conference last year, underlines the importance to do more to more effectively help those suffering from the abhorrent effects of anti-personnel mines and to prevent future casualties. The Maputo Action Plan provides a road map, but only by implementing can we improve lives, and at the same time help build resilient communities. As such, we see these efforts can be further supported by the new initiative of the International Federation, the "One Billion Coalition for Community Resilience", to be launched at the 32nd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent next week. By 2025, the Coalition's goal is for one billion people around the world to have strengthened their resilience in the face of adversity, including the risks from weapon contamination.

The International Federation and its member National Societies, as well as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), have been working together to operationalise the 2009 Movement Strategy on Landmines, Cluster Munitions and other Explosive Remnants of War. As a Movement our response is threefold: reducing the risk of those exposed to contaminated land, ensuring the necessary assistance to victims and enable them to live full lives in their communities, and working to universalize the norms contained in the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and other weapon-related treaties of international humanitarian law. Our daily operations in weapon-contaminated countries demonstrate the ongoing relevance of this Strategy for human health, security and development.

Since 2006, Southeast Asia has experienced almost 20% of all global casualties caused by anti-personnel mines and more than 50% of global cluster munition casualties, according to data compiled by the Landmine Monitor. Responding to this dire situation, the Viet Nam Red Cross Society hosted a workshop last March involving National Societies from the region, other Movement partners and civil society to identify ways to meet the challenges, with effective partnerships. A key insight from this workshop was that even though physical rehabilitation services exist for victims, we can and must do far more to ensure the social and economic reintegration of victims in their communities. The workshop resulted in agreed actions to be taken from 2015 to 2017, by National Societies in the region with support from partners. In addition, it is worth noting that in 2013 the Movement made a global commitment to increase its efforts towards inclusion of people with disabilities, including within our own organisations. The Movement will adopt a four-year action plan to implement this commitment at our statutory meetings here in Geneva next week.

Mr President,

National Societies with their auxiliary role, support their Government and reach out to communities to provide assistance. We have witnessed that this partnership with Governments, enhanced by a strong political will, has been key to the implementation of the Convention, as well as other internationally agreed agendas, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In fact, cooperation to implement the Convention is key to achieving the SDGs, because unless weapon-contaminated areas are cleared of landmines, development activities cannot be implemented to assist affected populations. Therefore, in addition to risk education for communities, and health and care to victims, the Movement has increasingly set up programs that provide alternative livelihood options for people at risk, and we will need more prioritisation by political authorities and more resources to make this effort sustainable.

Mr President,

The Movement is pleased to see our role recognised in the Maputo Action Plan and will continue contributing at the operational level, working to achieve its vision. Governments' adherence to all weapon-related treaties of international humanitarian law will be the foundation toward ending the era of anti-personnel mines. The International Federation again urges all States that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and to become part of the global effort to end, for all time, the preventable human suffering they cause.

In closing, I stress that our Movement is committed for the long-term. The global humanitarian problems caused by landmines and other explosive ordnances take decades to eliminate. And it threatens the lives and livelihoods of people and communities each day. We invite you to join the One Billion Coalition for Resilience to be launched by the International Federation. With our joint effort we will ensure that the Maputo Action Plan is fulfilled and takes us to our common goal: an end to the suffering caused by anti-personnel mines.

Thank you.