

## **ICBL Opening Remarks By Steve Goose, ICBL Chair**

*18MSP 16-20 November 2020*

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The ICBL would like to congratulate States Parties and the ISU for finding a way to make this MSP happen during these difficult times. It is yet another example of the commitment, flexibility, and ingenuity of the mine ban community.

To be sure, the pandemic has had its impact on our collective work, and not just the diplomatic meetings. It has understandably diverted some funding and has impacted mine action programs around the world, from survey to clearance to risk education to victim assistance to universalization efforts and beyond.

But, as documented in this year's ICBL Landmine Monitor 2020 report, our community has responded with great dedication and perseverance and creativity. The treaty remains strong, its impact remains powerful. Lives and limbs and livelihoods are being saved every single day.

This year's Monitor has mixed news.

Only one state was confirmed to have used antipersonnel mines: Myanmar. But, non-state armed groups used mines, mostly improvised, in at least six countries.

Global funding was down in 2019 (\$650 million, a 7% decrease) and casualties remained high (5,554). 80% of casualties were civilians, nearly half of which were children.

Still, more land was cleared and more mines were destroyed in 2019 than 2018.

And, risk education received greatly increased attention in 2020, in keeping with the Oslo Action Plan.

The pandemic perhaps negatively affected victim assistance efforts more than anything else. The impact was compounded by years of under-resourcing for victim assistance in many countries.

In Oslo last year, states agreed to address remaining contamination to the fullest extent possible by 2025. Too many affected countries are not on target to meet that goal.

Despite the pandemic, many States Parties can and should do more to end for all time the suffering caused by antipersonnel mines. Together, let's finish the job, always keeping 2025 at the front of our minds.

Thank you.