

**Statement on Universalization
18MSP Mine Ban Treaty, 16-20 November 2020**

Mr. President,

We have come a long way in universalizing the treaty and establishing a universal ban against antipersonnel landmines, 80% of the world's States have joined and the no-use norm holds strong.

We welcome the work done by the Presidency and the ISU on their universalization missions in Asia and the Middle East. However, since 2017 no new states have joined the treaty and the Marshall Islands remains the last signatory yet to ratify it. The promise of the Mine Ban Treaty can only be fulfilled when the remaining 33 States accede. For these states we need a targeted approach to ensure this happens.

For 20 years the Landmine Monitor has continuously reported the use of landmines by state not party Myanmar, and unfortunately this year is not an exception. Myanmar remains the only government that continues to use antipersonnel mines (in addition to use by non-state armed groups in a handful of countries). State Party Bangladesh requested Myanmar publicly to cease laying mines along their shared border and offered assistance for mine clearance, but so far, its request has been ignored. ICBL condemns all use of antipersonnel mines by any actor and calls on Myanmar again to immediately halt use of antipersonnel landmines and to join the treaty.

In light of near universal acceptance of the ban on antipersonnel landmines, we would like to also single out the US and the shocking reversal of its previous landmine policy announced earlier this year, that was rightly met with an international outcry. We call on the new US Administration to cancel this decision and take immediate steps to join the treaty.

This month during the First Committee a total of 163 voted in favor of the annual resolution in support of the treaty, including 17 states not party. We hope that even more will vote in favor at the General Assembly. To all states not party that voted in favor we say: Accede to the treaty. You will probably never use antipersonnel landmines; you probably act in compliance with the international normative framework; you will not produce them and some of you are even donors to mine action.

Throughout 2020, the ICBL and its members continued to promote universalization of the treaty globally, including in: China, Cuba, India, Iran, Lebanon, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Republic of Korea, the Democratic Popular Republic of Korea, and Singapore.

Mr. President,

States Parties must reflect on their strategies and actions for universal adherence. We always knew the last mile would be the toughest. It is time for all of us to think creatively and take concerted action to achieve full universalization. A truly mine-free world requires continued determination and hard work. Let's finish the job!

I thank you Mr. President