

Declaration of the ICRC on a process to prepare for the 2004 Review Conference (Fourth Meeting of States Parties, 16-20 September 2002)

The ICRC welcomes the non-paper put forward by Norway on the need to mobilize resources to achieve the humanitarian objectives of the Convention. This non-paper and the important paper of the President on this subject highlight the need to begin here and now to consider what remains to be done before and at the 2004 Review Conference and in the following years. We would like to comment briefly on the crucial role of the Review Conference.

At the 2004 Review Conference, the ICRC hopes to see all States Parties present concrete information on how they have implemented their obligations under the Convention. The first results will concern the complete destruction of stockpiles for those States Parties for which the four-year deadline has expired. At the Review Conference, we should also be able to take stock of progress made in the area of mine-clearance and on the reduction of the number of mine victims and have a clear analysis of unmet needs. It will also be essential that States Parties renew their commitments to long-term assistance to mine victims who will pay the price of landmine use throughout their lives.

In addition, we encourage States Parties to come to the Review Conference with specific and comprehensive plans for completing their mine-clearance work, for which the first deadlines will fall in 2009. The Review Conference should also be the occasion to ensure that the resources and mechanisms needed to complete work in time are in place. The five-year period between 2004 and 2009 will be a crucial phase in ensuring that the Convention delivers its promise to mine-affected countries and their communities. This is all the more so with the recent adherence to the treaty of two of the world's most mine affected countries, Angola and Afghanistan.

We urge all States Parties, regional organisations, the upcoming Intersessional Meetings and the President of this meeting to begin developing plans to ensure that the First Review Conference will be the event which demonstrates the success of this Convention irrefutably and ensures its complete implementation within the agreed time frames.

We also look forward to joining together with the ICBL and other agencies to help ensure that the Review Conference has a high profile at the national and international levels and the political and financial commitments needed for its success are achieved.

18.9.02