



THE 7<sup>TH</sup> 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 (7 MSP)

18-22 September 2006, Geneva

Agenda item 11.b "Assisting the victims"

Statement by

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THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION  
OF RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES

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Madam President,

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies is taking the floor at this important conference to stress **three points** which come to us from our worldwide membership of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Before making these points however, I note that we work within the Strategy of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement on Landmines. Accordingly, we pay tribute to the leadership provided by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to all components of our Movement.

Madam President,

**[Long term commitment]**

The International Federation applauds the tremendous success of the Convention on the prohibition of anti-personnel mines. However, the remaining mines still prevent children from playing at home and going to school, farmers from working their land, and local economies from growing. This way, landmines are a direct cause of poverty and represent a real obstacle for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Much more needs to be done.

The Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies, with the International Federation and the ICRC remain committed to our role as stated in the Ottawa Convention (Article 6.3.<sup>1</sup>). The personnel of National Societies in landmine affected countries including volunteers have been

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<sup>1</sup> Article 6 – International cooperation and assistance: 3. Each State party in a position to do so shall provide assistance for the care and rehabilitation, and social and economic reintegration, of mine victims and for mine awareness programs. Such assistance may be provided, inter alia, through the United Nations system, international, regional or national organizations or institutions, the International Committee of the Red Cross, national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies and their International Federation, non-governmental organizations, or on a bilateral basis.

devoted over the long-term, and with the support of the Movement, to alleviating the suffering of victims through the provision of a wide range of health and care services, training and informal education programmes.

For example, the Mozambique Red Cross (CVM) started mine awareness activities in 1994 among returnees after the war<sup>2</sup>. An advanced study was carried out in 1997, upon which a project was designed and implemented in 1999 covering all provinces to address the challenges associated with the existence of landmines. Nowadays, in order to guarantee continuing awareness, mine issues are integrated in local activities carried out by the volunteers (songs, stories, etc). There is also emphasis on ensuring that the mine victims continue to receive assistance.

Madam President,

**[International cooperation]**

Also in countries not directly affected by landmines, there is a welcome readiness from the National Societies to do what is possible to help. For example, the Netherlands Red Cross will launch a major fundraising campaign this autumn to raise money for victims of landmines, in the spirit of Article 6 of the Ottawa Convention.

Madam President,

**[Training]**

This year we are pleased to see the initiative taken by the Governments of Afghanistan and Switzerland to produce a leaflet on first aid to landmine victims in the pre-hospital phase. The International Federation would like express our appreciation for being given the opportunity to contribute our experiences, together with other agencies, in the formulation of the leaflet.

However, we would like to highlight the importance of training, which needs to accompany the distribution of this leaflet. Only through the provision of training and minimum first aid equipment, in particular to the most vulnerable populations, we can maximise the effect of the leaflet.

Madam President,

Anti-personnel mines exist on every continent like a plague damaging economic and social development of affected countries. Long term commitment, international cooperation and training are essential in order to end the suffering of victims.

For the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, we count on governments' strong will to bury anti-personnel mines in history, and not in our land. Our National Societies, as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field, continue to support local authorities to provide assistance to victims through physical and psychological rehabilitation and re-integration into society.

Thank you.

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<sup>2</sup> See mine project on the CVM Website <http://www.redcross.org.mz/>