

**ICBL Statement on Universalization
Mine Ban Treaty Intersessional Standing Committee Meetings
Geneva, Switzerland
27 May 2013**



Thank you Mr. Chair.

With the Third Review Conference of the Mine Ban Treaty taking place next year it is time to start reflecting on where we are with the treaty's universalization, where we would like to be in a year's time, and what needs to happen by then.

Universalization of this treaty has been a real success story – 161 or over 80% of world's countries are on board. With Finland's accession and Poland's ratification at the end of last year all of the European Union and all of NATO, with the exception of the US, are part of the treaty.

However 36 still states remain outside the treaty. Of those 32 stockpile antipersonnel mines, and assert the right to use these indiscriminate weapons. In today's world, and 15 years after antipersonnel mines were banned, this is shameful. The humanitarian harm caused by these indiscriminate killers is very well known, documented and unacceptable. It is high time to erase this relic of the past from the face of the Earth once and for all. The solution is straightforward: all remaining states need to join the treaty without further delay and destroy all antipersonnel mines.

The Third Review Conference next year, as mentioned by Belgium, presents a great opportunity for more progress on universalization. We should all be working to ensure that by the time we arrive at this milestone meeting:

- there is no more government use of antipersonnel mines and use by non-state armed groups is reduced;
- new states join the treaty such as Bahrain, Georgia, Laos, Lebanon, Mongolia, Nepal, Oman, Palestine, Sri Lanka, Tonga, United Arab Emirates and the US, to name just a few we believe could come on board soon. We are very pleased to see some of them attending this meeting, but regret that none of them spoke. We ask you not to be shy and speak up. Any time this week is good.
- other states commit to joining in the future and take concrete steps to do that.

We are therefore calling on all States remaining outside the treaty to stop clinging to this cowards' weapon and instead sit proudly among the treaty's members at the Third Review Conference.

We are also urging all States Parties to look closely at your commitments under the Cartagena Action Plan "to seize every opportunity" to promote universalization of the treaty and its norms, and to step up actions in the lead up to the Review Conference to ensure concrete progress on this front.

The ICBL continues efforts to expand the reach of the treaty and its norms and will continue to do so up to the Review Conference. Some of our recent actions included: the first ever ICBL advocacy mission to Myanmar last week, which included meetings with the President's Minister in Charge of the Peace Process and with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; ongoing

outreach at national level by ICBL campaigners in some twenty States not party as well as in Geneva; and events and actions in several states including Georgia, India, Republic of Korea, Lao PDR, Lebanon, Libya, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Syria, and the US undertaken by ICBL campaigners as part of the ICBL global Lend Your Leg earlier this year.

We would like to thank the Coordinator of the Universalization Contact Group, all States Parties involved in universalization efforts and the ICRC for their work so far and call on all States Parties to join these efforts. If all State Parties make a concerted effort between now and the Review Conference it should be possible to get more accessions by the Third Review Conference.

Universalization of the treaty and its norm should remain an important priority for us all until the day we can be sure that antipersonnel mines will never be used by anyone, anywhere, ever again.