



## Statement on Universalization

11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties, Mine Ban Treaty  
Phnom Penh, Cambodia  
1 December 2011

Thank you Mr. Chair,

The ICBL applauds Tuvalu and the Republic of South Sudan for joining the Mine Ban Treaty this year. We are very pleased to have new states coming on board for the first time in four years. It is especially remarkable to see South Sudan - the world's newest country - making the landmine ban its first international commitment.

We also welcome Finland's announcement on the adoption of its accession bill, and we look forward to seeing Finland among States Parties next year. At the same time we encourage Poland, the last EU member remaining outside the treaty, to finalize its ratification and join the treaty next year, as it has pledged to do.

Earlier this year we were pleased by the pledge of the Libyan National Transitional Council to not use mines and to ensure the destruction of all landmines in its possession. We now urge the future government of Libya to follow the commitment made by the National Transitional Council and join the Mine Ban Treaty.

We appreciate the updates today and yesterday from other states not party, including from China, India, Lao PDR, Myanmar, the US and Somalia.

We understand that the US landmine policy review initiated in 2009 is gathering steam. Together with the US Campaign to Ban Landmines, ICBL members around the world have been engaging the US since the very start of the review. We encourage the Obama Administration to be bold and find the way to come on board the Mine Ban Treaty and thereby formalize the US's *de facto* compliance with most of its provisions. We urge all States Parties to engage with the US Administration on joining the Mine Ban Treaty, at the highest level possible. Such engagement by a number of States Parties can be crucial.

While 2011 brought good news on universalization it also brought bad news for the norm against antipersonnel mines. Three states are confirmed to have used antipersonnel landmines in 2011: Israel laid new mines on its border with Syria, Libya under Muammar Gaddafi used mines on a massive scale during the recent conflict, and Myanmar continued to use mines as in previous years. There have been serious allegations of new antipersonnel mine use by government forces in Syria.

Every case of new mine use confirms the ongoing necessity and urgency of universalization of the treaty, which is not merely about increasing the number of States Parties, but reducing the threat and potential casualties.

The ICBL publicly condemned all instances of new mine use and called on the users to immediately stop laying mines, remove all planted mines, and join the treaty. We very much welcome public statements this year by the President of the 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties and other States Parties expressing concern with new mine use. We continue to encourage all States Parties to publicly condemn any new use of antipersonnel mines by anyone anywhere, to engage with the users, and to discourage any future use, as States Parties have committed to do under the Cartagena Action Plan.

Another concern for the ICBL is the lack of visible progress towards accession by a number of states,

some in in this region, which we believe are in a position to join the treaty without delay. These include: Lao PDR that has been a fearless leader on the Convention on Cluster Munitions; Nepal, which this year completed clearance of its contamination; Mongolia that has already committed on a number of occasions to join the treaty; Lebanon, which has been a champion on banning cluster munitions and host of this year's highly-successful Second Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions. The ICBL believes that all States Party to the Convention on Cluster Munitions should be able to join the Mine Ban Treaty, and vice versa. The two sister conventions are guided by exactly the same humanitarian principles.

The ICBL and its members around the world will continue working together with states not party, non-state armed groups, the ICRC, UN agencies and States Parties to push for progress on universalization. With Tuvalu, South Sudan, Finland and Poland joining in the span of a few months, we are re-capturing momentum on universalization. We urge all states to push together with us. Only then can we fully succeed.

In closing, we would like to thank His Royal Highness Prince Mired of Jordan for his tireless efforts on universalization. We also thank all States Parties that have been active on this front, including the President of the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties. We look forward to working very closely with you in the coming year to further universalize the treaty and the norm.

Thank you.