

## **ICBL Statement on International Cooperation and Assistance**

### **Twelfth Meeting of the States Parties**

**December 2012**

Mr. President,

The ICBL welcomes the positive trends on both growth and transparency we have seen on international assistance and cooperation. Donors and affected states contributed approximately \$662 million in combined international and national support in 2011, a record amount. This includes an increase of national contributions to mine action by \$38 million from 2010. National funding is now at 29% of global funding, a good sign of growing national ownership. More details on international assistance is available in the Landmine Monitor Report 2012 and the Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor website.

However impressive these figures may be, there are big questions remaining on whether this money is being equitably distributed, whether current levels of funding are sustainable, and whether the money is being well spent. We also noted with disappointment that contributions to victim assistance programs were down 30% last year, with visible effects on VA services provision.

On the first point – who is getting the funding – the Monitor reports that 10 mine-affected countries receive 70% of all funds. These numbers have not changed much in ten years. With the top 10 mine-affected States Parties likely needing significantly more time to clear their land, it is fair to conclude that these same 10 countries will continue to receive most of the funding. And while those with the most contamination certainly need high levels of support, we also call upon States Parties to better coordinate international assistance and ensure a broader group of states receive the support they need.

On the question of sustainability, we see that although in 2011 there were 41 States that provided mine action support, each year a small club of about 10 donors provides about 70% of all assistance. Such a concentration of donors may create more vulnerability than if funding was more equally spread out. In addition, budget cuts and other austerity measures are likely to

squeeze mine action budgets. What will be the priorities? And what information will these priorities be based on?

Thirdly, Mr. President, while increased levels of financial support and better reporting are good developments, they should not be confused with the various levels of quality, efficiency and the impact of international assistance. This is an area that States Parties should take more time to investigate, in order to understand the impact of their assistance and to inform evidence-based strategies for cooperation and assistance. For example, donors should partner with affected states to ensure they are getting a better and more realistic understanding of the remaining problem, which is critical to efficient mine action. We also repeat our call to States Parties to carefully assess the various funding instruments and channels available to them and to choose the ones that are the most direct, effective, and give the most value for money.

Finally, Mr. President, States Parties should make sure that support for victim assistance continues at sufficient levels in order to reach victims where they live. We understand that donors may be increasingly integrating victim assistance funding into broader disability and development funding, which is a logical development. At the same time, such funding may not necessarily translate into needed support for landmine victims, especially those living in remote areas that have not yet benefited from such development programs. Indeed, we have observed from states, field operators and survivors themselves that the drastic shortfall in funding to victim assistance last year was not counterbalanced by resources available through broader disability or development programming. That means that projects had to end or cut back services, and that clearly had an effect on landmine survivors. So as with clearance funding, we urge states that are mainstreaming victim assistance into broader budgets to consider continuing to also provide dedicated victim assistance funding until services through broader frameworks have developed the capacity to address the needs of survivors. This “twin track” approach will ensure that states are still living up to their commitments under the treaty.