



# ICRC

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

**15th Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling,  
Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction**

**Santiago, Chile, 28 November – 2 December 2016**

**Address by Lorenzo Caraffi,**

**Head of Regional Delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross**

**To Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay**

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention has brought tangible and life-saving results since it entered into force 15 years ago. More than 51 million stockpiled anti-personnel mines have been destroyed. Twenty-six States Parties have cleared land contaminated with anti-personnel mines and removed the dangers posed by these weapons. There are also concerted efforts underway to address the needs of anti-personnel mine victims.

For further evidence of the effectiveness of this Convention, one need look no further than Latin America. In the 1990's, the list of countries affected by anti-personnel mines in this region included Costa Rica, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Peru. Today, most of these have cleared their contaminated lands and efforts are well underway to remove the anti-personnel mines that remain. Thanks to the concerted efforts to implement this Convention, Latin America is on its way to becoming a region free from the threat of anti-personnel mines.

Yet despite these positive developments, it is clear that concerted energy and commitment are needed to ensure progress towards a mine free world. Anti-personnel mines – including improvised mines - still have an unacceptable impact on civilians and communities in far too many countries and territories; an impact that the International Committee Red Cross (ICRC) continues to see and respond to in its daily work. In Colombia, for example, we witness how anti-personnel mines and explosive remnants of war limit people's access to essential services. Working with the Colombian Red Cross in 2015, we helped more than 18,000 people reduce their vulnerability to anti-personnel mines by the building or repairing water facilities, shelters and schools in contaminated areas. Demining is also part of the peace agreement between the Government of Colombia and the FARC-EP and the ICRC has helped facilitate two pilot demining projects as part of the peace process.

At the 2014 Review Conference, States Parties announced their intention to meet the principal goals of the Convention by 2025. This cannot come soon enough for affected communities. At the start of this Meeting of States Parties, the ICRC would like to highlight several areas which we believe should be the focus of concerted effort so as to help bring us closer to that 2025 goal.

The first is reinforcing the norm against anti-personnel mine use and the efforts to universalize the Convention. Unfortunately, there are reports of anti-personnel mines being laid in a number of ongoing conflicts and the ICRC is very concerned about the dramatic increase in anti-personnel mine victims over the past year, as reported by the Landmine Monitor. We must continue to bring the humanitarian messages of this Convention to those who still employ these weapons. The use of anti-personnel mines by any actor is unacceptable and this must be clearly conveyed by States Parties and humanitarian organizations. States that have not yet joined this Convention must also be urged to do so as a matter of urgency. Those who have influence and dialogue with non-State armed groups must also act.

Secondly, we must ensure compliance with Article 5 and the extension request process. In the view of the ICRC, the Convention and the decision of the 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties set the requirements for dealing with both existing and new anti-personnel mine contamination. Many States Parties affected by anti-personnel mines have already been granted extensions of the Convention's 10 year deadline. But in order to meet the 2025 goal set out by the Maputo Declaration, progress in clearance will need to quicken and the need for further extension requests must be reduced. In addition, those States whose initial 10 year deadline has or will soon expire, must submit an extension request as a matter of urgency.

Finally, if we are to ensure that anti-personnel mine survivors participate in their societies on an equal basis to others, we must make greater progress to eliminate the barriers they face. This includes assessing the needs of victims, identifying gaps in existing services and ensuring that such activities have adequate and dedicated resources. It is also important to remember that the needs of survivors are life-long and that the obligation to assist continues well after mines are cleared from the ground.

In closing, much has been achieved with this Convention and much remains to be done. The goal of 2025 is on the horizon and we are confident that with dedication and commitment a world free of anti-personnel mines can be achieved. The ICRC looks forward to continuing its work and cooperation with you to help make this a reality.

Thank you.