



ICRC

International Committee of the Red Cross

Statement on Article 5

**Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
Meeting of States Parties
Vienna, Austria, 19 December 2017**

Thank you Mr. President,

The ICRC wholeheartedly congratulates Algeria for having completed clearance of all mined areas in its territory, thus fulfilling its Article 5 obligations.

We also commend the Committee on Article 5 Implementation for its impressive work this year. As attested in its report, the Committee has been thorough in its approach and analysis of extension requests, to ensure that Article 5 requirements are effectively implemented.

The ICRC welcomes the summaries provided by States Parties requesting extension of their Article 5 deadlines, specifically Angola, Ecuador, Iraq, Thailand and Zimbabwe. Although we were not in a position to comment on these specific extension requests, we are pleased that a number of them emphasized their commitment to being mine free by 2025.

As was stressed by ICRC President Peter Maurer at the start of this meeting, achieving the 2025 goal set by States Parties in the Maputo Declaration will require a greater sense of urgency and determination. With regard to mine clearance, this means that the pace of clearance in a number of States Parties will need to accelerate and that resources, both national and international, must be sustained and in some instances increased. States Parties that have already been granted extension requests must also ensure that progress is adequately reported and that any challenges they encounter are signaled to States Parties in Article 7 reports and in interaction with the Article 5 Committee.

Mr. President,

The clearance requirements and 10-year deadline in Article 5 of the Convention are legally binding obligations. Each State Party contaminated with anti-personnel mines must respect these obligations and, if they need an extension of their deadline, follow the established procedures for requesting an extension. To bring itself into compliance with Article 5, we urge Ukraine to submit its extension request as soon as possible. The ICRC understands the difficulties that Ukraine is facing, which it would

record in its extension request, and we note that States Parties have expressed widespread recognition of the extenuating circumstances and challenges that Ukraine is facing. We are thus confident that States Parties would assess the request with due diligence and understanding.