

**Eight Meeting of the States Parties to the
Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-Personnel Mines
Dead Sea, 18-22 November 2007**

ICRC Statement on stockpiling

Thank you, Mr. President.

The ICRC welcomes the announcement by Afghanistan that it now has completed the destruction of all its known stockpiles and therefore fulfilled its obligations under article 4 of the Convention. We would like to join previous speakers in supporting the amendments suggested by Algeria and Estonia to Article 7 reporting format, as well as the understanding given by the ICBL on the word 'discovered'. As the Vice President of the ICRC mentioned yesterday in its opening speech, the International Committee of the Red Cross is however very concerned that the nearly perfect record of compliance with the stockpile destruction obligations of the Convention may not be maintained in the years to come.

We understand that two of the major stockpilers of anti-personnel mines among States Parties are facing great difficulties in the destruction of their stocks of PFM-1 mines. The probable failure next year by one of these to meet its deadline would be a major blemish on the record of the Convention. This situation could set a very bad precedent and will affect the credibility of the whole Convention. This is a situation which must be considered urgent by all States Parties, for we all have a major stake in the outcome. This meeting of States Parties needs to play a role in preventing a situation which will seriously damage the Convention.

Regardless, of what has led to this situation, we will all lose if solutions to the problems facing the largest stockpilers among State Parties are not resolved in the very near future. Let me reiterate here the call made on Sunday by the vice president of the ICRC on all States Parties, and in particular those which are directly involved, to address and resolve this situation as a matter of great urgency.

I thank you, Mr. President.