



ICRC

Eighteenth Meeting of the States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Geneva, 16-20 November 2020

International Committee of the Red Cross

Statement on universalization

Thank you, Mr. President.

First, on behalf of the ICRC, let me thank you Mr. President for your leadership and commitment to promote universal adherence to the Convention.

There have been no new States parties to the Convention in the last three years keeping the number of States Parties to 164. While we celebrate the fact that over three quarters of States are party to the Convention, the lack of an increase in States Parties highlights the challenges that remain to achieving universal adherence to the Convention. Anti-personnel mines continue to endanger the lives and limbs of people in many contexts today, and we urge all States that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to the Convention without delay.

The year 2019 was the fifth year in a row which, according to the Landmine Monitor report, recorded high numbers of casualties from mines and explosive remnants of war, a large majority of whom were civilians. One of the reasons for this high number of civilian casualties is the new use of anti-personnel mines, including those of an improvised nature. Furthermore, 12 States not party have no moratoria on the production or transfer of anti-personnel mines, an increase of one State compared to previous years. The Landmine Monitor also reported the production of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature in 6 countries last year. It is therefore crucial to continue to promote the universal observance of the Convention's norms and objectives by all actors, including armed non-State actors, as indicated in Action#12 of the Oslo Action Plan. This necessarily requires efforts to access and engage in dialogue with these actors.

The ICRC continues to promote universalization of the Convention and understanding of its obligations in a number of countries and contexts, where we also work with National Red Cross and Red Crescent

Societies towards this goal. The ICRC also provides legal assistance to States in developing national implementing legislation.

Anti-Personnel mines were among the topics discussed at various national and regional seminars on international humanitarian law (IHL) organized or supported by the ICRC throughout the year, and we discussed ratification in bilateral meetings with governments across the world. We will continue doing so next year and place this Convention on the agenda of a number of regional events for 2021, despite the challenges posed by the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. President,

This Meeting offers a critical opportunity to increase momentum to promote universal adherence. This must remain a priority and shall only be possible with the continued efforts and support of all States Parties and partner organizations.

Thank you.