

**ICBL Statement on Cooperative Compliance
Mine Ban Treaty 20th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 24 November 2022**

Thank you, Mr. President,

We are gravely concerned Russia continues to attack the well-established norm against the use of antipersonnel mines. In Ukraine, it is laying mines on the territory of a state party to this treaty, which is unprecedented. Its forces are using victim-activated explosive devices, which are also banned by the Mine Ban Treaty.

We are horrified Myanmar has continued using antipersonnel mines for the past two decades, and according to the latest Monitor findings, Myanmar government forces have expanded use of landmines in the past two years.

All States Parties should condemn these and all instances of use by anyone, anywhere, under any circumstances.

We thank Sudan and Yemen for providing updates this morning on their efforts to investigate use allegations.

There are also allegations that State Party Ukraine has used antipersonnel mines. It is imperative that Ukraine confirms or denies such use immediately.

Overall, State Party compliance with the Mine Ban Treaty has been impressive, especially with regard to the core obligations not to use, produce, or transfer antipersonnel mines.

But, there are serious compliance concerns, as States Parties recognized in the Oslo Action Plan.

Eritrea is in violation of the Treaty by virtue of its failure to meet its clearance deadline of 31 March 2020, failure to submit an extension request so far, failure to undertake any clearance operations since 2013, and failure to submit a transparency report since 2014.

There has been a prolonged and extensive outreach vis-à-vis Eritrea carried out since 2019 which has not brought Eritrea back into compliance, nor established a cooperative dialog with Eritrea, so far. We regret Eritrea is absent at the meeting this week. We believe, at this MSP, States Parties should invoke Article 8.2 to address this matter to preserve the integrity and credibility of the convention. That would entail utilizing the offices of the UN Secretary-General and preparing for a fact-finding mission, if necessary.

Greece and Ukraine are in violation of the Treaty for having missed their stockpile destruction deadlines long ago. They have made little progress in recent years and neither has identified a completion date.

There are compliance concerns with respect to Article 3 on mines inappropriately retained for training and research, Article 5 on delayed action or non-action on mine clearance, Article 7 on the low rate of transparency reporting, and Article 9 on lack of national implementation measures.

At the review conference and in the Oslo Action Plan, States Parties agreed to expand the role of the Committee on Cooperative Compliance, giving it responsibilities under Articles 3, 4, 5, 7, and 9. They also agreed to expand the President's role in compliance, through what has been called an "early warning mechanism." If no information on implementing Articles 3, 4, or 5 is provided for two consecutive years, "the President will assist and engage with the States Parties concerned."

With the expansion of the roles of the President and the Committee on Cooperative Compliance, States Parties are in a much better position to deal with implementation and compliance concerns at an earlier stage and more effectively. Unfortunately, there is a lot of work to do.

With respect to Article 3, many States Parties are retaining mines under the Article 3 exception, but are not utilizing the mines for the permitted research and training purposes. As this continues to be the case year after year after year, it appears that the mines in fact are simply being stockpiled. As a matter of compliance, these states should either utilize the mines as permitted, or destroy them urgently. Some 48 States Parties have not consumed any retained mines or provided any updated information for at least two consecutive years.

With respect to Article 5, there are six mine-affected States Parties that have not reported information on implementation of Article 5 in an Article 7 report for two or more years. In addition, there are instances when State Parties have been granted mine clearance deadline extensions, but then undertaken little to no action to meet the new deadline. It would appear that such non-action or non-implementation is against the objectives and purposes of the Treaty, and should be addressed as a compliance matter. There are also situations where little to no clearance has occurred around some military installations, raising the question of possible military benefit from the emplaced mines. Another compliance issue is the failure of some states to submit extension requests on time, or to submit at all when faced with new contamination.

On Article 7, the level of compliance with the obligation to submit an annual transparency report has fallen to an embarrassing level of less than 50%. Some 90 States Parties have not submitted a report for calendar year 2021, of which most have failed to provide a report for two or more years. Notably, some states with key outstanding obligations such as clearance and victim assistance, as pointed out by the President, are failing to submit.

Similarly, too many States Parties have failed to enact appropriate national implementation measures as required by Article 9. There are more than 50 States Parties without national measures in place. The ICBL believes that new, stand-alone national legislation is the best way

to meet the Article 9 requirement. Action #50 of the Oslo Action Plan calls on states to urgently undertake and report on national measures by this 20th Meeting of States Parties.

These various compliance concerns are not new. They are long-standing, and States Parties have wisely begun to develop new approaches to deal with them. The key now will be dedicated and sustained attention from the President, the Committee on Cooperative Compliance, and all States Parties to address these concerns effectively.

Thank you.