



20th Meeting of the States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention

Geneva, 21-25 November 2022

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

Statement on Universalization

Thank you, Mr. President,

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

Anti-personnel mines, and in particular new uses of such mines, continue to endanger the lives and limbs of people in many contexts today. According to the 2022 Landmine Monitor Report, just in the past year, the use of anti-personnel mines – both manufactured and of an improvised nature – have been reported in at least six contexts which were alluded to by our Vice President on Monday.

After more than a decade of historic reductions, the last 7 years have been characterized by disturbing resurgence of victims of landmines and explosive remnants of war. According to the Landmine Monitor Report, more than 5500 casualties were recorded in 2021 adding to the growing tally of victims. Civilians and especially children continue to be among the most affected when such weapons are used.

Despite this reality, there has been no new State Party to the Convention in the last five years, keeping the number of States Parties to 164. The ICRC thus calls on States Parties to redouble their efforts, including through regional approaches, and urge the 33 States that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to the Convention without delay. It is critical that States Parties also urge all States and parties to armed conflict to already renounce the use, production, transfer and stockpiling of anti-personnel mines.

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. As the ICRC, we understand that several of the

States that are not yet party to the Convention are concerned about the fact that their domestic legal framework may not yet be in accordance with the obligations posed by the Convention. We therefore call on those States to continue the dialogue we have had together to find solutions to possible concerns and facilitate all remaining States' accession to the Convention. Anti-Personnel mines were among the topics discussed throughout the year, in bilateral meetings with governments, including National IHL Committees, as well as in dialogue with parties to armed conflict including non-State armed groups. The Convention was also on the agenda of regional and supra-regional events organized by the ICRC in 2022. The ICRC organized three regional IHL Conferences in Kathmandu, Seoul and Pretoria covering Asia Pacific and Africa, to promote the universalization of the APMBC and other weapons related treaties. The ICRC along with National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies will continue to promote the Convention's universalization in the coming year. But it is also our strong hope that all those discussions, be they at the national, regional or global level, will lead to concrete measures by States to finally reach the universalization of the Convention.

Mr. President,

Although 2025 was set as an aspirational deadline for achieving a mine-free world, we still have a long way to go. This Meeting, however, offers a critical opportunity to redouble our efforts in promoting universal adherence to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. This must remain a priority and shall only be possible with increased efforts and support of all States Parties and partner organizations.

Thank you.