

## ICBL intervention on Mine Risk Education and Reduction

### Intersessional meeting to the Mine Ban Treaty, 20-22 June 2022, Geneva

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Thank you Chair,

The ICBL thanks you for this opportunity to deliver a statement on mine risk education and reduction.

The need for mine risk education and reduction remains crucial given the high numbers of mine/ERW casualties that continue to occur worldwide. The Landmine Monitor recorded over 7,000 casualties in 2020, across 51 countries and three other areas, an increase from the 5,800 casualties recorded in 2019, and maintaining the upward trend apparent since 2015. With the outbreak of conflict in Ukraine this year, we anticipate that the severity of the risks caused by mines/ERW will persist as people continue to be exposed to conflict and new contamination. Equipping conflict-affected people with the knowledge and behavior they need to stay safe from mines/ERW is as important today as it was twenty years ago. This is true in States Parties, but also in states not party to the treaty, for example, Myanmar.

In 2019, with the adoption of the Oslo Action Plan, States Parties re-affirmed the importance of mine risk education and reduction by agreeing to five actions, actions #28 to 32 in the Oslo Action Plan, to improve the delivery and reach of risk education, and to help prevent new mine accidents and save lives. We commend States Parties for their efforts to strengthen their risk education commitments and to improve delivery.

We have indeed seen significant innovation in risk education in the last few years, despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The restrictions imposed in many countries to mitigate the spread of the virus spurred risk education providers to explore and expand new approaches to delivering life-saving messages through a wide range of interactive digital technologies.

States Parties and implementing partners have also made efforts to ensure that risk education programs reach specific at-risk groups, in line with Action#29 of the OAP. Men have been reached through targeted risk education sessions at places of work, including bus stations, construction sites and in agricultural fields. Teenage boys are being reached through digital technologies such as gaming apps, and persons with disabilities through materials and methods adapted to their disabilities. Refugees, IDPs and people affected by ongoing conflict remain a primary group for risk education, and efforts have continued to better integrate risk education with wider humanitarian interventions to ensure a coordinated approach.

The Explosive Ordnance Risk Education Advisory Group and the online International mine risk education working group continue to provide valuable support to the risk education community through coordination, training, information sharing, and advisory assistance.

However, there are still some areas that ICBL believes need further attention from States Parties to ensure that the risk education and reduction actions in the OAP are fully met and to improve the implementation of risk education globally.

In 2020, the IMAS 12.10 on Explosive Ordnance Risk Education was substantially updated to reflect current best practice and standards, and a Technical Note on Risk Education for Improvised Explosive Devices was developed in 2019. So far, we are aware of only five States Parties that have updated and aligned their national standards with IMAS 12.10, or are in the process of doing so. We encourage all affected States Parties to address this as soon as possible.

States Parties are required to report annually on risk education in their Article 7 reports, in line with Action #32 of the OAP. This includes information on the methodologies used, the challenges faced, results achieved, and with all information disaggregated by gender and age. Providing full and updated information is important for transparency, and also informs the sector of the progress being made. However, only a handful of States Parties provide full and detailed reporting on mine risk education, and beneficiary data is often not fully disaggregated, so this is another area we believe needs more dedicated attention.

Action #24, under the Survey and Clearance section of the OAP requires States Parties to include detailed, costed, and multiyear plans for context-specific mine risk education in their Article 5 extension requests. This can help to ensure that activities are properly planned and budgeted for, and that risk education is clearly recognized as an obligation of States Parties. However, risk education plans are frequently missing from extension requests. At best, past risk education activities are described, but no detailed forward planning is provided. With the six extension requests submitted so far this year, only 2 States Parties, Guinea-Bissau and Sudan, have provided detailed, costed and multi-year plans for mine risk education. States Parties submitting requests this year should ensure that such plans are included within their final extension requests that will be considered at the 20 MSP in November this year.

We continue to encourage donor States to promote mine risk education and to ensure that appropriate funding is made available, with risk education funds reported separately from clearance to enable risk education resourcing to be tracked.

In closing, we continue to hope that risk education will be elevated to a stand-alone agenda in the Convention's program of work to allow States Parties to report adequately on actions #28 to 32. In the meantime, we hope that States Parties will take the opportunity to update on their progress in risk education during the Article 5 session.

Thank you.