

**ICBL comments in regard to the Voluntary Trust Fund**  
*Mine Ban Treaty Intersessional Meeting, Geneva 17-20 June 2025*

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Thank you, Chair

The ICBL thanks the working group under Norway's leadership for its efforts in exploring the establishment of a voluntary trust fund, and for the informative update provided today. We appreciate the opportunities extended to the ICBL and other civil society experts to contribute to these discussions.

ICBL strongly believes that such a fund could have a significant positive impact on the implementation of Article 5, accelerating the pace of completions and enhancing the overall credibility of the treaty. We welcome and support the principles for consideration of the fund as presented today.

Last November we published a Background paper on the Proposal for a Completion Fund, that presented overview of existing needs and gaps, along with a potential list of countries that could be eligible for such a fund once created.

In our view, in the first instance, the fund should prioritize affected states that are in a position to achieve completion in a relatively short timeframe. This would include countries with limited contamination and those that have received little to no funding to date. Data compiled by the Landmine Monitor shows, for example, that States Parties in sub-Saharan Africa have particularly struggled to attract the funding that could help them meet their Article 5 obligations.

A key precondition for eligibility should be the submission of a sound, costed, and comprehensive work plan aimed clearly at completion, or a specific stage on the path to completion such as a comprehensive survey. The workplan should include a defined budget and a robust risk education plan, in line with the requirements of the Siem Reap Action Plan. Fund allocations should be time-limited, for example, to a two-year period, with a mechanism to regularly monitor progress during the funding period.

It is crucial that this fund delivers concrete results, demonstrating that limited, targeted funding can lead to tangible results, namely timely completion. A clear success story would not only validate this approach but could also encourage additional contributions and inspire other states to pursue completion. It may also provide an incentive for other states to join the treaty. We also believe that a VTF mechanism may enable a greater number of States Parties to contribute to funding mine action, in line with their obligations under Article 6 of the Convention.

Once countries close to completion have been considered, the possibility of expanding the fund's reach to others could be explored at a later stage. Building in some flexibility would be certainly useful.

The ICBL remains highly interested in engaging in further discussions and efforts toward the creation of this fund, which we hope will be established sooner rather than later, particularly given the current challenges and uncertainties of the mine action funding landscape.

Thank you.