



**Statement on Universalization  
Fifteenth Meeting of States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty  
Santiago, Chile, 28 November – 1 December 2016**

The Mine Ban Treaty is successful every day. It strengthens peace and prosperity around the world, in communities that no longer suffer the plague of landmines, in places where landmines no longer turn productive land into dangerous zones, and in the poorest villages where farmers can use their land again after it has been cleared. But, the promise of the Mine Ban Treaty will only be completely fulfilled when all of the 35 states still outside join it, and when a mine-free world is achieved.

The ICBL welcomes the steps taken by states not party toward accession to the treaty and the eradication of landmines.

In March 2016, Sri Lanka announced that its cabinet of ministers had approved accession to the Mine Ban Treaty, but unfortunately since then, no progress has been reported. We urge the government of Sri Lanka to expedite the accession process and to join the treaty as soon as possible, certainly before the next meeting of the Mine Ban Treaty.

The US government announced policy measures in 2014 banning the production and acquisition of antipersonnel mines, accelerating stockpile destruction, and banning mine use except in the Korean Peninsula. But no further action has been taken to accede to the Mine Ban Treaty. We urge President Obama to take a bold step in this regard by ending the Korea exception and putting in place a total ban on landmine use by the US, and by submitting the treaty to the Senate for its advice and consent.

In November 2015, Singapore Technologies Engineering announced that it had ceased the production of antipersonnel mines. While this is welcome news, the government of Singapore has not formally committed to no future production of landmines. It is time for Singapore to outlaw production, use, and stockpiling, and to join the treaty.

At the UN General Assembly First Committee last month, seventeen states not party voted in favor of the resolution promoting the treaty. That's half the states not party – all voicing their support for the humanitarian goal of the treaty.

All States not party must join the treaty without further delay. In addition, the holdouts should help solidify the norms of the treaty by taking interim steps toward a total ban, including:

- Adopting a moratorium on the use, production, and transfer of antipersonnel mines
- Providing information on stockpiles and destroying them, and
- Engaging in mine clearance and victim assistance where needed

Madam President -- Landmines are being used more frequently and in a more widespread manner by non-state armed groups than by states. The dramatic increase in landmine casualties that we saw last year was in part happening in conflict areas where such groups are operating. All non-state armed groups are urged to accept the treaty obligations, especially stopping the use of mines and destroying stocks!

The organization Geneva Call and other ICBL members engaged with such groups in 2016, encouraging them to renounce the use of mines and to allow mine action in areas under their control. Indeed civilians who live in mine-affected areas under the influence or control of armed groups often receive little or no support on mine action, be it victim assistance, mine risk education, or the marking and clearance of mined areas.

Madam President,

The first action of the Maputo Action Plan requires States Parties to actively work to further universalize the treaty. But, no state has joined in the past two years.

It is time for all States Parties to reflect on their strategies and actions for universal adherence. It is time for all of us to think of creative actions, effective ways and stronger political support for universalization. 2017 will be the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this life-saving treaty. Let's make it even more successful by adding new States Parties.

Thank you.