

**Statement on Universalization
Intersessional Meeting of the Mine Ban Treaty
22-24 May 2019**



Thank you, Mr. President,

The universalization of an international norm is about the community of all states joining it, but perhaps more importantly, it is about insuring the coverage of its benefits for humankind as a whole.

The universalization of a humanitarian disarmament treaty is a human security responsibility shared by all states, towards people.

Can we overlook the value of universalization of the Mine Ban Treaty?

It has been an important global achievement to stigmatize antipersonnel landmines. But this is a means to an end. 2025 should not only be an aspiration for the full implementation of the Treaty. It should also be seen as the year for the completion of its universalization.

Hundreds of millions of girls and boys, men and women, remain outside the protection of the Mine Ban Treaty. Fifty-four percent of the world's population (4.1 out of 7.7 billion people) is outside its protection. Landmines pose a humanitarian threat but are also an obstacle to sustainable development.

It is for these reasons that the ICBL has continued its universalization efforts to maintain and expand the dialogue with states not yet on board, such as Cuba, Georgia, Lebanon, the Marshall Islands and Singapore through a letter-sending campaign.

We, the civil society, are proud to actively carry out our advocacy duty, in the framework of mine action, to promote the Treaty's universalization. And working hand in hand with you, the States Parties, we trust you will continue, and I quote from the preamble of the Mine Ban Treaty, "to work strenuously towards the promotion of its universalization" and bring the rest of the countries on board.

We call on you, the States parties, to knock on the doors of hold-outs through demarches, high level meetings, etc. Now that the Marshall Islands have just opened their Permanent Mission in Geneva, please go and meet them!

Thank you