

# "We Want to Make Sure States Keep Up the Energy"

Speaking notes for Tamar Gabelnick, ICBL Treaty Implementation Director

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Thanks for being with us this morning.

I am happy to address you on behalf of my colleagues from non-governmental organizations from over 90 countries in all regions of the world, including mine action operators, landmine survivors' groups and others working in the field.

As you have heard this morning, the Mine Ban Treaty is a strong instrument that has always been associated with high levels of enthusiasm and motivation. It has stigmatized a conventional weapon in widespread use for decades and has served as a model for banning similar weapons, such as cluster munitions.

The [Cartagena Summit on a Mine-Free World](#) held last year in Colombia was a remarkable event that allowed us to look back with satisfaction on progress made and to celebrate the power of a treaty that has inspired so much dedicated effort year after year. But in recognition of the large amount of work that still remains, states adopted the Cartagena Action Plan, a clear and concrete roadmap of what is required over the next five years to bring us significantly closer to a mine-free world. They committed to ending the suffering caused by landmines in our lifetime, with sustained political will and financial means.

The 10th Meeting of the States Parties is a key opportunity to see if states have translated the impressive words from Cartagena into actions that make a real difference for mine-affected communities. I can confidently tell you that Mine Ban Treaty meetings are not just a feel-good exercise. They are characterized by transparency and frank exchanges on all aspects of the treaty.

There is still a lot of work to be done before we can cross the landmine issue off the world's to-do list. This is why we want to make sure states keep up the energy, which is our slogan for this year. As civil society, we will continue to challenge them to be as efficient, committed and energetic as possible. For the meeting we have four main objectives.

Our *first objective* -in no particular order- is to review the progress made on mine clearance. There are 38 States Parties that are affected by antipersonnel mines, and under the treaty they have 10 years to clear their mined areas. Nineteen States Parties have been granted extensions to these deadlines, but we believe many of them are not on track to meeting the revised deadlines.

In addition, at this meeting, States Parties will have to decide whether to grant mine clearance deadline extensions to Colombia, Guinea-Bissau and Mauritania, who were all supposed to complete clearance in 2011 but won't be able to make it, and to Chad, Denmark and Zimbabwe, who have already been granted a first extension to enable them to do further survey work in order to create better clearance plans. Decisions on these extension requests are not be rubber-stamping exercises: the requests have been studied by a group of states with input from experts and comments fed back to the requesting states. We hope that, as in the past, the decisions taken on these requests will pinpoint areas of concern, lay out suggested benchmarks, and even encourage the state to finish earlier than the new deadline. We want requesting states to explain the exceptional circumstances preventing them from meeting their deadline, and to present clear and ambitious plans to finish the clearance as soon as possible.

Our *second objective* is about the people who are at the heart of this treaty: landmine survivors, their families and communities. Victim assistance is the area of mine action that has made the least progress in the last ten

years. Hundreds of thousands of survivors worldwide still need to see their rights respected and their needs met. This is a matter of human rights.

Landmine survivors themselves have listed a series of very concrete asks in their Call to Action delivered in Cartagena. They called for states to give priority to socio-economic inclusion, so they can once again be productive members of their communities. They asked for services to be available and accessible, even for landmine survivors in remote areas. And they pointed out that survivors must be involved in designing, carrying out, and monitoring assistance. So this year again, the ICBL delegation to the 10MSP will include landmine survivors who will come to engage with government delegates and hold them accountable.

Our *third objective* is about getting rid of antipersonnel mines that still sit in warehouses. This is the most effective form of preventative mine action: destroyed mines will never claim any victims. Four States Parties have missed their mandatory deadline for stockpile destruction in the past years: Belarus, Greece, Turkey and Ukraine. Collectively, they still have over 10 million mines to destroy. These cases need to be quickly resolved so these states can come back into compliance with the treaty. Belarus and Ukraine must destroy a type of mines called PFM that contains chemicals that make them difficult and expensive to destroy. But delays in getting started and in getting operations up to full speed have been to blame in the other cases.

Our *fourth objective* is about financial support and other forms of cooperation and assistance, such as technical aid. We urge donors to provide multi-year funding to enable States Parties to implement clearance and victim assistance plans in a predictable, sustainable way. We also call on mine-affected states to increase their own contributions. And we call on all parties to think creatively and strategically about how to get the job done in the most efficient way, including how to make sure no states fall through the funding cracks and how to encourage knowledge-sharing among affected states.

In addition to these objectives, we have seen some worrying allegations of use of antipersonnel landmines in recent years in Turkey, Cambodia, and Peru, along with the known non-compliance with stockpile destruction by four states. We expect all States Parties to ensure that the treaty's provisions are respected by all, and to react firmly in cases of known or alleged non-compliance.

All these implementation challenges must be met by states for the Mine Ban Treaty to remain strong and to continue to inspire work in other fora. We greatly appreciate the leadership of the Albanian Presidency in conducting the work of states as they try to address these challenges, and I thank Mr. Turdiu for inviting the ICBL here today.

Now in terms of bringing new states on board the treaty... At the Cartagena Summit, the United States attended a formal Mine Ban Treaty meeting for the first time, and announced it would begin a formal review of its landmine policy. Since then, the National Security Council has led an inter-agency review involving both the Departments of State and Defense and in consultation with legislators, NGOs, some States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty, and landmine survivors. We call on the U.S., which has contributed more to mine action than any other country in the world, to now strengthen this support with a pledge to join the treaty.

I'd like to end by inviting you to join us in this room on Tuesday 24 November at 10:00am for the launch of the Landmine Monitor 2010, which will include a questions and answers session with experts in all areas of mine action. I would also like to bring your attention to the launch of Cluster Munition Monitor 2010, which took place yesterday in Bangkok. Information on both reports is available at the Monitor's website: [www.the-monitor.org](http://www.the-monitor.org).

Thank you! I am happy to answer your questions.