

Thank you Mr. President,

Article 5 is not just a process, it's a promise. While mines are in the ground, the threat to lives and livelihoods remains.

Survey, clearance, and mine risk reduction and education prevent the injuries and fatal accidents caused by landmines and allow people to live free from trauma and fear.

We have recorded significant progress in clearance since the Mine Ban Treaty came into force in 1999, with 31 States Parties reporting clearance of all antipersonnel mines from their territories. We congratulate Chile, which announced completion of its Article 5 obligations earlier this year, and the UK which announced completion this month. Steady progress in clearance globally was reported in 2019 by most of the States Parties with Article 5 obligations.

Mine risk education saw a much-needed revival in interest in 2019, with the establishment of an international Explosive Ordnance Risk Education Advisory Group and, for the first time, the inclusion of a distinct set of risk education and reduction measures in the Oslo Action Plan. Risk education activities were conducted for populations affected by landmine contamination in at least 28 States Parties in 2019.

However significant challenges remain. Despite the efforts of risk education and clearance, the number of reported casualties in 2019 remained unacceptably high, at well over 5,000, with two-thirds of casualties reported in 36 States Parties.

Ten States Parties still report extensive contamination of over 100km². Protracted conflict and the growing use of improvised mines is preventing survey and clearance efforts and adding to existing contamination in some States. Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Mali and Tunisia all need to report and clarify contamination from improvised mine types.

Eritrea, Niger and Nigeria have not reported on implementation of Article 5 obligations in 2019 or 2020 and may require assistance from the President and committees, in line with Article 49 of the Oslo Action Plan. In addition, Algeria, Kuwait and Nicaragua all need to clarify the extent of residual mine contamination in their territories.

The COVID-19 pandemic this year has further compounded the challenges faced by States Parties and mine action programs.

ICBL urges all affected States, donors and other stakeholders to increase their efforts to meet the obligations set out in the Treaty, to fulfil its promise to keep affected people safe, and achieve the goal of a landmine-free world.

Thank you.