

## ICBL Statement on Universalization

19<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty, 15-19 November 2021

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Thank you, Mr. President.

The ICBL remains alarmed by the ongoing casualties and suffering caused by the use of antipersonnel mines, including of those of an improvised nature, by the government of Myanmar and non-state armed groups in Afghanistan, Colombia, India, Myanmar, Nigeria, and Pakistan. There are also indications of new use of antipersonnel mines in late 2020 in the context of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. **States must strongly condemn all use, by anyone, and do everything they can to put an end to all use.**

Mr. President.

While the treaty boasts an impressive 164 States Parties, placing it amongst the most universally accepted disarmament treaties, there are still 33 countries remaining outside of the framework, many of which hold large stockpiles. While most of them comply with key treaty provisions, which demonstrates their support to the vision of a mine-free world and helps reinforce the stigma created by the treaty, more strategic and targeted work is needed to bring them onboard.

We are concerned over the fact that no new State Party has joined in the last four years.

We call on states still not party to the treaty to join the rest of the international community to rid the world of these inhumane and immoral weapons and provide assistance to the countless victims and survivors who have suffered and continue to suffer from their impact.

We appreciate your initiative Mr President, in bringing universalization back as an agenda item and in conducting meaningful bilateral engagements with several states not party. We need more of such, and we encourage other States Parties to re-focus their efforts in implementing actions 11 and 12 of the Oslo Action Plan, and to mobilize available political and financial resources to regain momentum in treaty universalization.

This year, the ICBL and its members continued their efforts to promote universalization in: Azerbaijan, India, Kazakhstan, Lao PDR, Lebanon, Libya, Nepal, Pakistan, Singapore and the US. We look forward to continue and broaden these efforts in cooperation with the incoming President and relevant stakeholders, to help push states to overcome the remaining obstacles to treaty accession.

Our work on universalization is not over - a concerted effort is needed in order to reach the finish line. We must develop a comprehensive, tailored strategy in which the Presidency, States Parties, the ICRC and civil society work in unison. The Universalization Special envoys must be re-activated and fully engaged in these efforts. If we continue business as usual, it is highly unlikely that we will have any new State Parties in a near future.

I thank you Mr. President