Good afternoon,

We're getting towards the end of a long and rich day, and I'd like to thank you for your patience and time.

Advocacy and awareness are words which makes a lot of sense when we want to raise the profile of an issue. That was the case for the ICBL in 1992 when we called for a ban on landmines. We first spread the word about the devastation caused by these weapons, then transform this into a political message and a strong campaign to convince governments they could renounce the use of that weapon, and had to support clearance programmes and assist survivors.

It took the campaign 5 years to reach the point where a country, Canada, would actually take the lead of an unprecedented process by which an international treaty was negotiated and signed in less than a year banning antipersonnel landmines.

Again through joint advocacy with governments who had signed, in fifteen months the Mine Ban Treaty entered into force.

Only joint efforts between civil society and governments, including the EU, could lead to such a result. It has been fortunately repeated with the Cluster Munition Coalition, the civil society campaign to ban cluster munitions. Once again, through targeted efforts a weapon causing unacceptable harm to civilians has been banned.

But we all know that entry into force, although a threshold in the life of a treaty, is just really the first step towards seeing this treaty delivering on its promises. The work starts there. Collectively, governments, civil society, and all stakeholders, need to make sure that all States Parties comply with their obligations on time.

That is why advocacy for, and awareness on, the Mine Ban Treaty has been needed for the last ten years and still is. That's why I would particularly like to thank the European Commission and the DG Relex, most particularly Lars -Gunnar Wigemark and Maria Cruz Cristobal for organizing this Mine Awareness Seminar, and for their persistence in keeping the issue of landmines and cluster munitions on the EU agenda.

Why is it so essential?

We need to keep hammering that the mine problem can be solved in our lifetime in the majority of the affected countries if there is the political will to do so. Lessons learned from the past ten years demonstrate this, and states have written it in the Action Plan adopted in Cartagena just last year, at the Second Review Conference of the Mine Ban Treaty.

We need to recall though that for survivors, landmines became a lifelong problem, as Firoz mentioned. However, he also told us how we could provide survivors with the assistance that will help them rebuild their life after the
accident, differently certainly but with happiness…let's listen to him and advocate for these wise words to be integrated into development and financial plans.

Compliance with the Mine Ban Treaty obligations led to remarkable achievements in the last decade, and we heard about them this morning.

But there is still a lot to be done before we can cross the landmine issue off the world's to-do list. The need to solve the landmine problem runs the risk of being forgotten among the many priorities of this world if a dedicated community does not recall it tirelessly.

When adopting the Cartagena Action Plan, states agreed on an ambitious & strong plan on all aspects of mine action. It must be implemented!

State of play:

**Universalizing the treaty and the non-use norm**

- 39 states still not on board
- Finland and Poland committed to join by 2012!
- USA is reviewing its landmine policy. Let’s ensure the conclusions of the review recommend adherence to the Mine Ban Treaty.
- Norm is taking hold but requires our continued commitment
- Landmines use is stigmatized: last year, only Russia and Myanmar used the weapon, and non-state armed groups in a handful of states

**Achieving lasting and meaningful change in the lives of survivors**

- Hundreds of thousands of survivors worldwide who need to see their rights respected and their needs met
- Priority identified by survivors themselves: socio-economic inclusion to become again productive members of their communities

**Clearing mines**

- More than 70 states and territories still affected to some extent
- 10 year deadline - States requesting an extension need to present strong plans to get it, and those who have been granted an extension need to implement their plan. International cooperation and assistance needed. We urge donor states to coordinate to ensure all states that have expressed a need get support

**Destroying all stockpiles**

- The only 4 States Parties with a remaining obligation to destroy stockpiles missed their mandatory 4-year deadline: Belarus, Greece, Ukraine and Turkey. The EU is playing a special role with each of these countries.
- States not party such as USA, China and Russia still stockpile over 160 million antipersonnel mines.

**International cooperation and assistance**
• Costs of clearance and ongoing victim assistance will place a strong demand on affected and donor states for sustained or increased funding for at least the next 5 years
• We call on donor states faced with budget difficulties not to give up, but to think more creatively, strategically and in a coordinated manner about how to get the job done
• We call for multi-year commitments from donors, and for affected states to contribute as much as possible.
• We call on the EU to be a generous, accessible and pragmatic donor. Generous by making available long term funding for clearance and victim assistance. Accessible by ensuring mine action is prioritized in development priorities of its partners; or that funding reach beneficiaries in mine affected areas when clearance and victim assistance is not prioritized, since victim assistance very rarely is. Pragmatic by ensuring partners have clear plans that outline their long term needs and approach; also by assessing assistance coordination.

We commend the EU for adopting a new Joint Decision in support of the Cartagena Action Plan.

The remaining tasks lie on our collective list, even if first and foremost the responsibility of compliance is with the state party itself. The spirit of the Mine Ban Treaty has always put forward a sense of a collective responsibility to ensure the Treaty would have an impact. So together we need to ensure the job gets done.

There are many ways to do so:

Mine action and the Mine Ban Treaty must remain a priority for all governments, particularly for all affected states, which should prioritize mine action in their development plans and requests for assistance.

Mine action and the Mine Ban Treaty must also remain a priority for organizations that can make a difference, and today, your represent a lot of them.

We know landmines, cluster munitions, and explosive remnants of war are one issue among many others that require your attention and support, but the only way to win that battle will be to lead it until the end, truly and efficiently. It is not often that states have an opportunity to achieve victory over a humanitarian problem. This opportunity must not be missed and should inspire us all.

We need to be true to the humanitarian objectives of the treaty. Prioritization and planning are certainly required, but the objective should remain to not leave a single landmine behind, and to clear as quickly as possible;

Survivors need to see their rights respected and receive the assistance they need, as outlined by Firoz.

Compliance has been one of the major successes of the Mine Ban Treaty to date. However, 4 states are now in violation for missing their stockpile destruction deadline (Belarus, Greece, Turkey and Ukraine), and some states lag behind (like Venezuela which has not started demining yet after ten years!). Let’s keep up the pressure and provide the means for these states to come back in compliance with the treaty as quickly as possible.

Efficiency is a word we also read and hear everywhere these days. Ten years of implementation of the Mine Ban Treaty led the mine action community to draw lessons we can all build on.

These lessons learned, and the current financial and economical crisis, should lead us all to review the way we operate in order to maximize the use of resources available, and ensure they are used as quickly and effectively as possible in mine affected countries.

You have seen many people in the photos behind me. (Reference to the powerpoint presentation). They are working hard in mine-affected countries to clear mines, to provide assistance and to advocate for a mine-free
world. Or they survived a mine explosion or a cluster munition explosion, and they are striving to move on with their lives. They are doing their fair share of the work. What you and I can do is to make sure the treaty delivers on its promises, and to make sure every decision we take helps supporting a quick, efficient and sustainable solution to the mine problem. I thank you on their behalf for your continued support.