

# Editorial - Come, Share, Commit and Care

ICBL Ambassador Tun Channareth calling on states to come prepared to the Cartagena Summit. Geneva, May 2009. Photo: Mary Wareham

When we started the campaign, it was common to hear that mine clearance would take centuries, that victim assistance was too broad an issue to be tackled effectively, that stockpile destruction would cost too much. A decade of Mine Ban Treaty implementation proved this was wrong. A mine-free world in our life time is a Mission Possible. But we are still far from it. The Cartagena Summit is the time for states to clearly show their determination to live up to their commitments to survivors and their families, to communities still living in the fields of death.

States should come to Cartagena ready to firmly declare their determination to remain true to the humanitarian objectives of the Mine Ban Treaty, and to do everything they can to make sure those goals are reached . and soon! The best way to do so would be first to proudly share results and successes of actions taken at the national level in recent years. Difficulties and challenges encountered should be seen as an incentive to think differently about how to finish the job. Problems should be tackled; they cannot be used as an excuse to stop working or delay actions indefinitely. Survivors and their families, people living in mined areas must not be kept waiting any longer.

We hear that the current financial and political environment is not conducive to long-term commitments to mine action. If the environment puts pressure on states' budgets, what about the constant pressure on those for whom daily survival is already a challenge? Once again, we call on states faced with budget difficulties not to give up, to use this opportunity to think more creatively and strategically about how to get the treaty's work done.

The costs associated with ongoing victim assistance obligations and completion of mine clearance plans will place a strong demand on mine-affected and donor states for sustained or increased funding during at least the next five years. We call on states to come to Cartagena with multiyear commitments and strategies for ensuring the new funding required to cover such costs. We also specifically call on affected states to contribute as much as possible to their own mine action activities, and to use the funds in the most efficient way.

Since its entry into force, the Mine Ban Treaty has proven to be one of the brightest points in the world of disarmament and an exceptionally robust instrument of international humanitarian law. In fact, its success has triggered new possibilities and renewed political will for creating groundbreaking international instruments such as the Convention on Cluster Munitions and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The inherently mutually reinforcing elements of all of these treaties provide us with new platforms from which to spread our messages and we should seize every opportunity to advocate for them. Central to the success to date has been the enthusiasm for ridding the world of antipersonnel mines shown year after year by States Parties, international organizations and civil society. Such commitment is essential, but cannot be taken for granted. This is why we are asking states to come to Cartagena, share their successes and creativity in realising the vision of a mine-free world and tangibly commit to finish the job. We know you will be there because you care.

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