



Cartagena Summit on a Mine-Free World

"A Shared Commitment"

Cartagena, 29 November to 4 December 2009

High-level Segment

Statement by

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International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

"Reducing the impact of weapon contamination and promoting the community development through preventing the risk and assisting the affected population in long term"

Madame President,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today, and to deliver the message from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies.

- It is an honour to be given the floor to speak on behalf of the International Federation and its 186 National Societies. We pay tribute to all the States present at this important Second Review Conference to the Landmine Treaty, 10 years into its implementation. Your presence reflects a continued determination to rid the world of the scourge of landmines.
- 10 years down the line much has been accomplished. Even though it is appropriate to recognise the many successes and achievements of the Convention, **increased** commitment and resources will be required to fulfil the commitments and promises in the Convention in the coming years.
- For this Second Review Conference, the International Federation is very pleased that victim assistance in particular has been made a key focus area.
- As President of the Colombian Red Cross I would also like to take advantage of this opportunity to reiterate my National Society's commitment to continue and step up our efforts to reduce the risks arising from weapon contamination as well as providing assistance to victims, their families and their communities.

Madame President,

- Through National Societies' work with communities affected by landmines and ERW, the IFRC has witnessed the devastating consequences of these weapons on individuals, families and communities. Based on this experience, we must also conclude that we have still not reached the promise a majority of the world gave the victims of antipersonnel mines in 1997.

- The aim is to ensure the full participation in society of survivors and their families. This depends on functioning health and social infrastructures, including psychosocial and socio-economic services. In order to achieve this, affected states must prioritise the construction of necessary infrastructures, which includes developing national plans and allocating resources for their implementation.
- Many affected countries require substantial support to develop and provide health and social services. We urge all states in a position to provide assistance, financial as well as technical, and to do so for as long as it is required. It should be provided with a view to meeting the needs of the most vulnerable people. It links to the broader work being done by governments for persons with disabilities and is a commitment that needs to be stepped up.
- Experts, practitioners and survivors met in Oslo in June this year, and made key recommendations for the advancement of the work with victim assistance. These recommendations as well as an appeal to all states have been distributed by the ICRC and we sincerely hope that these will be seriously considered in your future work.

Madame President,

- The implementation of the treaty is a state responsibility, and needs to be reflected in national plans and budgets. The Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies, as auxiliary to our governments are willing and able to assist in the process of implementation, as many of us have done for decades already.
- Last week, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement adopted a new Movement strategy on Landmines, Cluster Munitions and other Explosive Remnants of War. The new Movement Strategy will guide its future work to reduce the human costs of these weapons. It also aims to build, strengthen and mobilize the capacities and resources of all the components of the Movement consisting of the ICRC, the Federation and 186 National Societies.
- Inspired by this adoption more than twenty National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies are gathered here in Cartagena to transform this strategy into concrete and improved action.
- The Strategy emphasises the role of National Societies as auxiliaries to the public authorities in their countries. This enables National Societies, through their humanitarian diplomacy activities, to promote accession to and implementation of international treaties, including the Mine Ban Convention with their governments. Through their grassroots networks, they are also uniquely placed to work closely with the individuals and communities affected by land mines, in preventive activities and victim assistance.

Madame President,

- On behalf of the IFRC and all its National Society members, I am proud to sign the Cartagena Declaration today as a witness to the commitments made by the States. We share a profound commitment to the objectives of the Convention, and invite governments to work with us to turn their promises made here in Cartagena into actions at the national and local level, for the benefit of the most vulnerable people.

Thank you.