



ICRC

**Tenth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions
Geneva, 30 August – 2 September 2022**

**International Committee of the Red Cross
Statement on clearance and risk reduction education**

Thank you, Mr. President.

At the outset, the ICRC wishes to commend the Clearance and Risk Education coordinators Sweden and Guyana as well as the Analysis Group on Article 4 Extensions for their thorough and diligent work over the past year. The ICRC was honoured to have made its contribution to the work of the Analysis Group.

The ICRC also commends those States Parties that have made progress in clearing cluster munition remnants in the past year. According to the *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2022* report, approximately 67.5 square kms of cluster munition contaminated land was cleared by States Parties in 2021 and 80,000 submunitions were destroyed.

Despite these welcome achievements, out of the 10 States Parties still contaminated by cluster munition remnants, no State Party completed its Article 4 obligations over the past year, and only one State Party was on track to meet its Article 4 deadline without the need for an extension, according to the *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2022* report. Considering that each of these remnants continues to represent a deadly risk for civilians, including children, we cannot be complacent about the challenges that remain before us. Affected States Parties, supported by donors and operators, must increase their efforts to complete clearance within the deadlines established by the Convention, in line with Section V of the Lausanne Action Plan.

Mr. President,

Allow me to reiterate the critical importance of implementing risk education activities in line with Section VI of the Lausanne Action Plan, in view of the indispensable role these activities play in protecting civilians from the risks posed by cluster munition remnants pending their clearance.

In this respect, in 2022 the ICRC is carrying out initiatives to address the threat posed by weapon contamination in up to 50 countries and/or territories, including, in many contexts, activities implemented by National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. They are involved in risk awareness and safer behaviour training and activities, data collection and information

management, with technical and financial support from the ICRC. Most of the ICRC's risk awareness and safer behaviour activities were adapted to continue disseminating these messages in areas highly affected by the presence of explosive hazards while following COVID-19 safety protocols, including the use of radio spots, animated videos, flyers, billboards and online tools.

The ICRC has also enhanced its efforts on data collection and data management in affected countries in order to support evidence-based decision-making and priority setting in weapon contamination programmes. Significant progress has been made in its work to standardize the collection by its programmes of data related to weapon contamination. We are currently using several newly developed data templates in line with International Mine Action Standards in 16 contexts.

Mr. President,

The Lausanne Action Plan promotes the research and development of innovative survey and clearance methodologies which take into account environmental impacts and concerns (Action #21). We wish to underscore that mine action must "do no harm" to the communities and areas where contamination exists, which includes mitigating any adverse environmental impacts of clearance operations. This issue was also addressed in the ICRC's [Guidelines on the Protection of the Natural Environment in Armed Conflict](#) (rules 24 and 25) published in 2020. In this respect, the ICRC is also organizing for the first time an "Environmental Impact Management in Mine Action" workshop in the ASEAN region jointly with the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre (ARMAC) in October 2022. Given that the mine action sector is still at the development stages of integrating, mainstreaming and regulating environmental protection and impact mitigation in policies and practices, the key to progress is to make efforts to connect with and draw upon relevant expertise from outside the sector at various levels.

To conclude, the fact that new cluster munition victims have been reported by four States Parties over the last year is a stark reminder of the critical importance of completing clearance of contaminated areas, and of international cooperation and assistance to make this happen as soon as possible. Every remaining cluster munition remnant threatens lives and limbs of affected communities.

Thank you.