



ICRC+IFRC | Red Cross Red Crescent calls for long-term commitment to end suffering and casualties caused by cluster munitions

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Dubrovnik/Geneva – The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement calls for long-term commitment to implementation efforts to prevent any future use of cluster munitions and increased support to victims at the First Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions taking place in Dubrovnik, Croatia, this week. The Review Conference marks five years since the Convention entered into force.

Speaking for victims who have indiscriminately lost limbs, family and livelihoods, the President of Croatian Red Cross President, Dr Josip Jelic, representing the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, said: “We know first-hand the consequences of cluster munitions. During the war between 1991 and 1995, 14 of my country’s 21 counties were polluted with landmines. Now twenty years later, our children face the dangerous consequences of 60,000 explosive remnants remaining in Croatia. We condemn the use of cluster munitions. We urge States Parties to join together long-term in implementing the Convention.”

In agreement, the Vice President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Ms Christine Beerli says: “Ninety-five states now prohibit cluster munitions. This is indeed progress, yet much remains to be done. In the words of the Convention, to put an end for all time to suffering and casualties caused by cluster munitions, we must strive for universal adherence to the Convention. We must ensure States Parties remain on track to meet their clearance, stockpile destruction and victim assistance obligations. We must ensure that commitments and action are clear for the next five years.”

The Red Cross Red Crescent also emphasized that enhanced country ownership supported by effective partnerships for implementation are critical to translate commitments into real actions to fully adhere to the Convention. National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies have played an important role working with their governments, and contributing to the adoption and implementation of the Convention. Partnerships with relevant sectors at all levels, including with people in weapon-contaminated communities, will support the Convention to achieve its goal of ending the suffering and casualties caused by cluster munitions.

“The Red Cross and Red Crescent is compelled by the humanitarian imperative to do all we can to ensure that future generations are protected from the scourge of cluster munitions,” said Dr. Jelic. “We must do more collectively to ensure the Convention is fully implemented.”

Worldwide in countries such as Iraq, Croatia and Cambodia, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement responds to the human toll of cluster munitions and community dangers posed by contaminated lands – providing mine risk education, alternative livelihood programmes and physical rehabilitation services.

The Croatian Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross and the ICRC will organize a workshop at this First Review Conference, to support National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies from countries which are not party to the Convention to promote adherence. Croatia ratified the Convention on 5 June 2009.

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