

ICBL Comments on the Draft Maputo Action Plan
Second Preparatory Meeting for the Third Review Conference of the Mine Ban Convention
10 April 2014



Thank you Mr. President-Designate.

We would like to start by congratulating Mozambique for producing a very strong action plan that not only lays out useful guidance for the next five years, but also sets out an ambitious goal for the next decade, namely for all **current** States Parties – and I stress that the text refers only to current States Parties since there seems to be some confusion on to whom this points apply –to **strive** to finish their major treaty obligations and otherwise ensure full respect for the Convention’s norms within the next decade. As we announced at the First Preparatory Meeting in December, the ICBL has issued a similar completion challenge to States Parties for Maputo.

So we strongly support the goals laid out in the introduction, though we would also like to see explicit mention of the goal of seeing no more use of antipersonnel mines by anyone, anywhere, as soon as possible and no later than 10 years from now. We would also like to see the goal of universal adherence to the mine ban norm in the Universalization chapeau, in addition to seeking greater overall support for the Convention.

Turning to other points in the plan, we would again like to thank Mozambique and its group of supporting states for all the hard work that has already gone into the text. On the whole, the action plan covers all the key areas of work that need to be prioritized over the next five years and do so in an ambitious and constructive manner.

We have two general suggestions, and then a few specific ones. First we believe it would be useful to simplify much of the language, which currently tends to be rather long and complex, so that each action sets out a clear and measurable goal. Second, we would like to see more time-bound commitments, which give an added incentive for state to take quick action.

Turning to some specific points, we believe the clearance section could use some restructuring and a sharper focus. To begin with, in the chapeau language, we do not believe it is fully accurate to say that land release methods are “largely well known” as in some states there is still a need to develop and fully implement land release policies and standards. We also believe the focus at this stage of implementation should be on identifying and clearing confirmed mined areas rather than continuing to rely on outdated, and sometimes exaggerated, estimates of suspected areas to describe and act on their mine contamination problem. So we would like to suggest that the action plan– in clear language – commit states to 4 actions:

1. Make sure states have adequate land release standards, policies, and methodologies in place
2. Use them to identify confirmed mined areas, or to refine their current assessments of confirmed areas
3. Clear the confirmed mined areas with the urgency this task requires, and
4. Report comprehensively on these efforts, including how they compare with benchmarks set out in their extension request plans.

This may indeed be the general intent of the action points as drafted, but it is difficult to know what’s meant by the complex action points.

On victim assistance, without wanting to add too much to these already lengthy and complex action points, we would like to suggest 3 small additions that we believe could do much to strengthen the text.

First, on action 12, which is about assessing victims' needs in order to match them with existing services or to identify gaps in services, we believe it should specifically call for referrals for victims to such existing services. Such referrals have proven very effective by our member organizations working the field as the most successful way to ensure immediate access to existing services, but it needs more support from states.

Second, on Action 16, which is about inclusion of mine victims, we would like to suggest adding the need to enhance the capacity of landmine victims and their representative organizations. If we are really going to reinforce efforts for their full and active participation in all matters that affect them, we need to take steps to increase their capacity to do so. A good example is to strengthen capacity for peer support, which has proven extremely effective and affordable way to overcome trauma, facilitate access to service and ensure full inclusion in communities.

Third, there are many action points oriented towards integrating VA into broader frameworks, which is a goal we certainly share. Our concern has always been to ensure that support through such services and programs actually reach landmine victims. We would like to see language added to ask states to collect data and otherwise specifically monitor the impact of such broader frameworks on survivors.

Finally, we would like to warmly thank those states today who voiced their appreciation for the contributions of the ICBL and its member organizations and who suggested inserting in the Maputo Action Plan a specific reference to the role that we can – and fully intend to – play in supporting the implementation of the action plan.

As always, we would be pleased to work with the President and other states on specific language to further strengthen the action plan.

Thank you