



"Enhanced country ownership is key to achieving the goal of the Convention"

Third Review Conference of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use,
Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their
Destruction

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High-level Segment

Statement by

Dr. Yaseen Ahmed Abbas

President of the Iraqi Red Crescent Society

On behalf of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent
Societies

Check against delivery

Mr. President,

Thank you for giving the floor to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). Speaking for the first time here, let me begin by thanking you for the hospitality and hosting this Conference in Maputo, 15 years after the 1st Meeting of States Parties to the Convention in 1999.

Mr. President, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

With all that has been accomplished in the past 15 years, we are now facing various challenges brought by the perception that weapons such as landmines, cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war are now "yesterday's news".

Only a month ago, a weather event simply broke this illusion. In the wake of the floods that hit the Balkans, authorities warned that many of the more than 100'000 remaining landmines dotted across Bosnia had been dislodged by heavy rain, flood waters and hundreds of landslides.

This is just one of the consequences of our unfinished work. **Delays in finalizing the clearance obligations of the Convention are contributing to the existing vulnerability created by landmines and to people's inability to sustain their sources of livelihood due to land denial, especially in poor and developing countries.** The urgency of the Convention's implementation, including its universalization, remains. We need to reinvigorate the Convention with stronger political will, so we can definitively put an end to the casualties and suffering caused by anti-personnel mines.

Mr. President,

The entry into force of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) marks a change in attitude towards the topic. No longer should we look at disability only as a medical issue, but rather we are called upon to look at the barriers in our societies towards the full participation of everyone, regardless of their physical status.

In the past few days, we have acknowledged several encouraging examples showing that **country ownership is key in fulfilling commitments.** Over time, when most of the obligations of the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention are fulfilled, the CRPD can help to ensure that the progress achieved for victims of anti-personnel mines is sustained.

Mr. President,

As effective and capable institutions are a sine-qua-non condition for strengthening country ownership, one of the ways forward will be enhancing partnerships at all levels. These partnerships must aim to increase the capacities of local institutions and communities. Speaking on behalf of the IFRC and in my capacity as the President of the Iraqi Red Crescent Society, I wish to use an example from my national society.

✕ The Iraqi Red Crescent Society as auxiliary to public authorities has been supporting the Iraqi Government in the implementation of the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention. Despite the progress made in these two years, the Iraqi Red Crescent must further scale up its actions, which are facing new emerging challenges at the local level brought by, for instance, more frequent terrorist acts, conflicts in Anbar province, increasing internally displaced populations and refugees from Syria.

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Despite the progress made in the past two years, facing new emerging challenges brought by internal conflicts in both Anbar and Moasil provinces, the Iraqi Red Crescent Society has scaled up its action.

Today we are providing support to almost one million IDPs. For instance, in Sinjar alone, 48'000 meals are provided ~~to~~ on daily basis.

For example, in 2013, the Iraqi Red Crescent, with effective partnership, such as with our local government and NGOs, was able to accomplish an ambitious program which reached more than 54,500 beneficiaries. The program included mine risk education activities, vocational training for income generating projects in 3 major governorate of Wasit, Dewanyia and Baghdad, as well as support in the provision of artificial limbs to victims of Anti-personnel landmines in Wasit, in collaboration with Iraqi mines clearance organization. In addition, with the Iraqi Red Crescent's auxiliary role to public authorities, we have provided support to the civil defense for location and identification of new areas contaminated by anti-personnel mines and other explosive weapons, especially after the landslides in April in the eastern borders of Iraq.

Mr. President,

A strong political will and country ownership empowered by effective partnerships can make an ambition a reality. With the commitments made by stakeholders here, we shall regard Maputo at this point in the time of the Convention's implementation as the starting point of a final phase. Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies in 189 countries, with their auxiliary role to public authorities, have been part of implementers of the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention. We shall continue to do so, and you can continue to count upon our support.

I thank you for your attention.