



United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action

Sixth Meeting of States Parties to the **Convention on Cluster Munitions**

(5 – 7 September 2016)

Statement on Clearance and Destruction of Cluster Munitions Remnants and Risk Education

Geneva, 5 September 2016

Delivered by Mr. Bruno Donat, Chief, Geneva office, UNMAS

Mr. President,^{1 2}

The following statement is delivered on behalf of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA) comprising the United Nations entities³ involved in mine action.

Article 4 completion is one of the crucial components of this Convention. The United Nations recognizes the progress made by States Parties and the challenges they are facing in clearance of cluster munition remnants. The United Nations assists many States Parties in fulfilling these obligations.

For example, in Lebanon, UNMAS, UNDP and other partners have supported the Lebanese Mine Action Centre in releasing, by 2016, more than 68 million square meters of cluster munitions and landmine contaminated areas, thereby positively impacting livelihoods in some 300 villages. Based on the latest statistics, 97 per cent of the cleared lands have been put to immediate socio-economic use.

In 2015, UNDP and other partners assisted the Lao National UXO (unexploded ordnance) Programme to clear more than 19 million square meters, including 17 million square meters for agriculture and 2 million square meters for other development projects. This benefitted some 99,000 people and, in the process, led to the identification and destruction of more than 51,000 items of UXO, more than half of which were cluster munitions remnants.

Overall, among the 25 affected countries and territories⁴ that have participated in the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) mechanism of the United Nations Strategy for Mine

¹ Ambassador Henk Cor van der Kwast, Ambassador at large, Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the Conference on Disarmament

² Coordinators of the Working Group on Clearance and Risk Education: Bosnia and Herzegovina and Norway

³ The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) / United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) (Chair), Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), UN Development Programme (UNDP), Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS), UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), World Food Programme (WFP), World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) (Observer), and the World Bank (Observer).



United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action

Sixth Meeting of States Parties to the **Convention on Cluster Munitions**

(5 – 7 September 2016)

Action 2013-2018, some of which are affected by cluster munitions, nearly 90 per cent of identified contaminated areas have been released back to communities.

Furthermore among countries and territories participating in all four rounds of data collection, the aggregate proportion of identified contaminated land that has been cleared and/or released back to the community has increased by ten percentage points, from 61 per cent at the start of 2014 to 72 per cent at the end of 2015.⁵

Finally, the United Nations wishes to reiterate the importance of mine/explosive remnants of war risk education as a mine action pillar, particularly in instances in which clearance of cluster munitions is not yet feasible. The United Nations supports risk education campaigns that are specific to the local threats, including cluster munition remnants. This has been particularly important in newly affected countries such as Syria, Ukraine and Yemen. For example in Syria and Yemen, with the support of UNICEF, the national school curriculum has been reviewed to reflect risk education related to cluster munition remnants.

Thank you.

⁴ Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Cambodia, the Central African Republic, Chad, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Eritrea, Jordan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libya, Mali, Mozambique, Nepal, the State of Palestine, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan (incl. Abyei and Darfur), Tajikistan, and Western Sahara

⁵ Some countries and territories have been able to make more progress than others; the need for support remains, as some countries have not made significant progress towards clearance of identified contaminated land since the start of the M&E Mechanism and in relation to their baselines.