



United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action

**Third Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions
Oslo, 12 September 2012**

**Statement on Clearance and Risk Reduction
Delivered by Ms. Agnès Marcaillou, Director, UNMAS
on behalf of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group for Mine Action (IACG-MA)**

Mr. President,

I deliver the following statement on behalf of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group for Mine Action (IACG-MA) comprising the 14 United Nations Departments, Agencies, Funds, and Programmes involved in mine action.

The United Nations acknowledges the fact that almost all States Parties and signatories have taken measures to address cluster munitions contamination and risk reduction. We welcome the updates provided by States on the progress achieved, notably the reports provided by *Afghanistan, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Iraq, Lao PDR, Lebanon and Mauritania* - all of which receive support from the United Nations.

As stressed previously, land release techniques can be employed to achieve effectively clearance deadlines, including through non-technical survey and technical survey, which should be used before employing clearance techniques.

The United Nations believes that with sustained national commitment and international support more affected countries could join Albania and Zambia in declaring their countries free of cluster munitions.

Discussions have been ongoing with the Mine Action Support Group, through the Australian Chair, on support and assistance to affected States striving for 'completion'. As part of the United Nations' approach to the Completion Initiative, we intend to support clearance obligations not only related to the Mine Ban Treaty but also those under Article 4 of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. The United Nations will also be giving further consideration to elaborating its conceptual approach to this issue.

Finally, Mr. President, we would like to stress that gender and age sensitive risk reduction through mine/ERW risk education continues to be of critical importance in areas contaminated by cluster munitions - both before and during clearance operations, and particularly when cluster munitions remnants are located in unmarked areas.

Therefore, the United Nations encourages States Parties, as well as signatories, to systematically report on risk education activities.

Thank you,