



Convention on Cluster Munitions

Intersessional Meeting – April 2012

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE

Statement by Australia

17 April 2012

Statement delivered by Ms Merinda Petersen, Intern, Australian Permanent Mission, Geneva

Thank you Madame Coordinator.

Australia thanks Mexico and Spain for their leadership on international cooperation and assistance, and for their preparations for today's meeting. We offer them our full support.

Australia is committed to efforts to enhance the availability of and effectiveness of cooperation and assistance in relation to the CCM.

We think it is important to emphasise that Australia takes a comprehensive approach to our mine action cooperation and assistance and does not differentiate between action on types of explosive remnants of war, including mines and cluster munitions, in situations where one or more of these weapons are relevant.

As such it is difficult, in many circumstances, to distinguish between the provision and utilisation of our funding for work in relation to mines, cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war.

Since pledging \$100 million to mine action in November 2009, Australia has so far provided \$77.7 million for mine action initiatives. This funding is inclusive of our support to cluster munitions. Australia has provided significant support to countries affected by cluster munitions including Laos, Lebanon, Afghanistan, the DRC and Iraq.

At current projections, we will exceed our commitment of \$100 million to mine action for Australia's Mine Action Strategy for 2010-2014. This builds upon Australia's previous contribution of more than \$75 million for mine action in 2005-2009.

In other interventions, I have mentioned some of our funding initiatives since 2 MSP which is intended to support the Vientiane Action Plan.

Since 2 MSP, Australia has committed a range of funding that will directly or indirectly progress the work of the Convention. For example, we have made a \$6 million contribution through UNDP to continue our mine action support for Cambodia and to return more than 25 square kilometres of contaminated land to safe productive use.

We also wish to advise that Australia has undertaken a mid-term review of our Mine Action Strategy. The findings of the Review are expected to be available shortly. This is part of an ongoing process of reviewing how we can be most effective in assisting States to meet their obligations under the CCM.

Madame Coordinator

We are of the firm view that our individual efforts will be more effective if we work in a strong and closely coordinated partnership with affected States, other donors and implementing agencies.

Australia welcomes any opportunities to explore and discuss how our individual assistance efforts can be collectively applied and coordinated to effectively assist States in meeting their Convention obligations.

As Chair of the Mine Action Support Group we expect to progress such work. This includes overseeing a study into effective coordination of mine action, including identifying ways to share information and coordinate programs more systematically, and to explore ways in which the Mine Action Support Group can contribute to this. Additionally, the MASG study will look at how donors can effectively apply their resources to most effectively assist countries to complete their clearance work.

In this regard, Australia encourages affected states to continue their efforts to confirm the extent of their cluster munition remnant contamination and to clearly identify their assistance needs to the international community.

To effectively plan and program our international assistance in mine action we require affected States:

- to provide accurate information on their cluster munition challenges and resource requirements,
- to demonstrate ownership and the national priority accorded to cluster munition action including through ratifying the Convention and providing national contributions; and
- to provide effective national leadership and coordination of cluster munition action.

We thank State Parties and signatories for the efforts already made in this regard.

We look forward to working with State Parties, UN agencies, implementing partners and other donors to assist States in meeting their obligations under the Convention.

Thank you.