

**Convention on Cluster Munitions.
Intersessional meetings, April, 2012, Geneva
Norwegian statement on cooperation and assistance
Tuesday 17 April**

Thank you chair

Article 6 on international cooperation and assistance and the corresponding actions in the Vientiane Action Plan constitute a roadmap for supporting the implementation the operative articles of the convention. While all states are ultimately responsible for compliance with their obligations of the Convention, no state with real needs will be left to shoulder all the burdens of doing so alone. The Convention came about through a true global partnership between affected and non-affected states, together with civil society and international organizations. It is the implementation of article 6, as well as actions 33 – 50 that will make this partnership work for clearance, stockpile destruction and victim assistance as well.

Financial resources are essential to achieving results on victim assistance, clearance and stockpile destruction. But money is not sufficient to succeed. Individual and institutional competence and commitment, political will, courage and leadership, an entrepreneurial and innovative spirit, the willingness to listen to the affected and to learn from the past as well as to take cues from new ideas are just some of the non-fiscal faculties necessary to employ in order to reach the aim of ending the suffering caused by cluster munitions. All actors involved in the effort have a role and a responsibility to make this happen.

Since the negotiations that preceded the adoption of the Convention in 2008, it has been the view of Norway that Article 6 concerns *all* states, because all states are in a position to support actions to address the problems caused by cluster munitions.

Clearly, some states are in a better position than others to provide *financial* support, and they are expected to do so as part of their implementation of the Convention. But a narrow focus on counting how many dollars that are channeled to cluster munition programs annually will not only make us lose sight of the important non-fiscal aspects. It would also provide a false picture of how much that actually is invested – as not all funding is tagged as or dedicated to address cluster munition programs only. This is of course particularly true of financial support to victim assistance, which often will be part of broader support for health, education and social programs.

Just as states with obligations to implement article 3, 4 and 5 have particular responsibility to take national ownership of the problems and demonstrate political will and leadership to solve the problem, states that provide financial support, like Norway, have a special responsibility to ensure that the support is structured and provided in ways that facilitate national ownership, innovation, coordination and optimal utilization of the resources. This includes a responsibility to ensure that funds provided are directed to areas with most positive impact.

There is no one-size blueprint solution for this, as implementation of the operative articles will vary between and within affected states. In some places the best support will be a limited cash-injection to a single actor to solve a clearly defined problem, in other places it entails the balancing of short-term and long-term needs, where a diverse set of support mechanisms must be utilized. The basis for making such priorities must be developed through strong cooperation with all relevant stakeholders, with national authorities in the lead, and solid evidence for needs on the ground.

Chair,

We warmly welcome your initiative to produce a catalogue of best practice and lessons learned in cooperation and assistance, as we believe such a book will contribute to better informed discussions in the future and hence make our discussions more relevant to the challenges at hand. From our side, we will contribute to this catalogue with experiences from using article 6 as a means to work closely with both national authorities and NGOs.

Thank you.