

**Statement by**  
**Delegation of Lao PDR on National Implementation Measures**  
**At Intersessional Meeting of State Parties to CCM**  
**Wednesday 18 April 2012, Geneva**

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Lao Delegation, I would like to express our appreciation to New Zealand, as Coordinator on National Implementation Measures, for its tireless efforts and excellent work in coordinating and preparing for this meeting.

Action#63 of Vientiane Action Plan calls on States Parties, as a matter of urgency, to develop and adopt comprehensive legislative or other implementing measures, as appropriate, in accordance with Article 9 to implement all obligations under the Convention. In this connection, allow me to share with you some information on national implementation measures that so far have been put in place by the Government of the Lao PDR.

1. In 1996 the Government adopted a decree on establishing the **Lao National UXO Programme** (UXO Lao); and in 2004, another decree on establishing the **National Regulatory Authority** (NRA) for the UXO Programme in Lao PDR. The NRA has been given the mandate to **control, coordinate** and **regulate** the UXO/Mine action sector. In order to address the UXO issue in line with the current context of CCM and rural and poverty eradication which is a priority given by the Government, a new **Prime Minister Decree No. 406**, was adopted in November 2011. Under the new decree the NRA board is now chaired by the Minister to the Prime Minister's Office who is the President of the National Leading Committee for Rural Development and Poverty Eradication. The member of the NRA Board is also expanded to include representatives from mass organizations. **The objective of this exercise is to better integrate the UXO sector activities into the national development strategies, particularly rural development and poverty eradication.**

2. In 2004 a **National Strategic Plan for the UXO Programme 2003-2013**, called “**The Safe Path Forward**” was adopted. The strategy is now revised to make it in line with the obligations under CCM. The revised Strategy called “**The Safe Path Forward II**” 2011-2020, offers a clear long-term vision for the UXO sector. After a long and prudent exercise, it was approved at the Government Cabinet meeting last month and it will be officially declared very soon. Furthermore, in order to effectively and efficiently implement our obligations under the Convention on Cluster Munitions, a 10-year-plan has been drafted in consultation widely with all stakeholders. The Plan is also in the final process and it should be available for implementation in the very near future.
3. The **National UXO/Mine Action Standards (NS)** was adopted by the NRA Board in 2007. The purpose of the NS is **to ensure safety, efficiency and effectiveness** in UXO/Mine Action within Lao PDR. The National Standards details the minimum standards and requirements applicable to all UXO/mine action organizations operating in the country. **In November 2011, the NRA organized a review meeting of the National Standards**, with the objective of continuous improvement and to give priority to the clearance of Cluster Munitions.
4. A UXO Trust Fund administered by UNDP was established in 2010. The objective of the Trust Fund is to support Lao PDR fulfill its obligations under the Convention and to use it as an additional channel to mobilize fund in addition to those funding through bilateral mechanism.
5. As the UXO is a cross-cutting issue that needs a wide, strong and consistent commitment from within and the international community, Lao Government in collaboration with UNDP adopted a **Lao PDR specific MDG 9** in 2010. The goal of MDG 9 is to set up some targets to be fulfilled by 2020, namely: to ensure the complete clearance of UXO from priority/high value agriculture land by 2020; to reduce substantially the number of casualties as a result of UXO incidents; and to ensure that the medical and rehabilitation needs of all UXO survivors are met in line with treaty obligations under the Convention on Cluster Munitions. To further formalize the MDG9, we launched a logo design competition during the event of Mine Awareness Day in April 2012 and the winning logo for MDG9 will be launched during the celebration of the Entry Into Force of CCM in this coming August.
6. With the objective to increase the efficiency of the UXO sector, for better planning and effective clearance, the Government supports the development of the **District Focused approach**, an important mapping tool using non-technical and technical survey, **to better estimate the size of the cluster munitions contamination** in Lao PDR and to enable the better use of the available clearance resources. It is currently a pilot project

with various operators involved. The **NRA will evaluate and consolidate the outcomes and the best methodology** will be selected for further implementation.

7. New clearance technologies are also being explored and tested for better and quicker clearance rate. Mechanical clearance is being tested in Xiengkhouang Province and we also plan a new detector trial to take place sometime this year.

**With regard to Penal Sanctions**, we have some articles of the **Penal Code** dealing, not with cluster munitions particularly, but with **war weapons** and **explosives**. Further amendment to Penal Code or new legislation required under the Article 9 will be further developed in the coming years.

These are what I would like to share and update you Mr./Madam coordinator.

Thank you for your attention.