Introductory remark by Lao PDR

Intersessional Meeting of the Convention on cluster Munitions

Session on Clearance and Risk Reduction Education, 17 April 2012
Coordinator’s Introduction by Mr. Khonepheng THAMMAVONG
Minister Counsellor/Deputy Permanent Representative
Permanent Mission of the Lao PDR to UNOG

Excellencies, distinguished delegates
Ladies and Gentle men,

First of all, allow me on behalf of Coordinators of the working group on Clearance and risk reduction Education, Lao People’s Democratic Republic and Ireland, to extend our warmest welcome to all representatives from states parties, signatories, observers to CCM, international organisations and civil society your participation in this session. I would like to take this opportunity to thank state parties for the support expressed at the 2MSP for our appointment as coordinators on this important issue for the period up to 2013 and we also like to express our appreciation to Lebanon, president of 2MSP of CCM and the executive Coordinator’s team for their ongoing support and assistance in preparing for this meeting.

Before starting a substantive discussion part, I would like to outline the provisions of article 4, Vientiane Action Plan (VAP) and other document related to Clearance and risk reduction, and the contents are as follows,

Firstly: the Article 4 of the CCM is one of the key provisions of the convention. It seeks to reduce the humanitarian impact of cluster munitions remnants. It requires states parties to clear areas contaminated by cluster munitions as soon as possible but no later than ten years after entry into force of the convention for that state party. States parties also undertook to report annually on the status and progress of clearance programmes and article 4 also includes a provision requiring affected states to take all feasible steps to mark and fence off contaminated areas and to conduct risk reduction education. In addition to obligations under article 4, in article 6 of the convention states parties are strongly encouraged to provide assistance to help clear and destroy cluster munitions.

Secondly: Vientiane Action Plan (VAP) was adopted at the 1MSP, composed of 66 Actions which build on the obligations and commitments of the CCM by setting a number of measurable steps to implement convention and among those actions 10 to 19, are specially relevant to the clearance and risk reduction education. These actions call on affected states parties to start on developing a national plan on clearance, to collect information, to start to identify their possible the location and size of all cluster munitions contaminated areas, to increase capacities for clearance and to apply all available and relevant methods of technical and non-technical survey for clearance and conduct risk reduction programmes to ensure awareness among civilians.
Thirdly: in addition to the VAP, the 2MSP warmly welcomed the paper on the application of all available methods for the efficient implementation of Article produced by Australia as friends of the Chair on clearance and risk reduction education and encouraged states parties to implements the recommendations contained in that paper. I would like to express again our gratitude to Australia for this valuable contribution and hope that we can build upon it.

The outcome and input of this segment will contribute to in developing the Oslo progress Report which to be adopted at the incoming 3MSP of the convention in September 2012.

Excellencies, Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentile men

In order to proceed to the part of a substantive discussion, I would like to pass a microphone to my co-coordinator, Mr. Robert Jacksion, Deputy Permanent Representative of Ireland to the Conference of Disarmament.

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