

**Third Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions
Oslo, 11-14 September 2012**

Lebanon Statement under General Exchange of Views item

**Delivered by: Ambassador Najla RIACHI ASSAKER, Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the
United Nations in Geneva**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

as the Lebanese Presidency have spoken earlier on IHL, I would like to take this opportunity to elaborate on some of the work that has taken place within the framework of this Convention, under my leadership as President of the 2nd Meeting of States Parties. However, before I do so, I would, again, like to congratulate the Government of Norway for hosting us this week; I believe the seamless execution of events that we have all witnessed during our stay thus far is a clear indication of the year that lies ahead of us as States parties to the Convention, under the motivated guidance of our newly elected President.

Mr. President,

Lebanon is truly proud to have presided over this life-saving Convention during a period so marked by progress and further growth.

Since the 2MSP was convened in September 2011, the work of the Lebanese Presidency has been based upon the series of decisions by States Parties during the closing day of that meeting. To this end, we have convened ten meetings of the Coordination Committee in addition to 3 informal open-ended consultations. I must thank Coordinators, States, the UN and the ICRC as well as the CMC for their continuous engagement throughout this year, whose input into this process has been invaluable. I must here recognise the invaluable support, I and my team have received from the executive coordination team, led by madam Sara Sekkenes. We are most grateful and indeed indebted to her unwavering support throughout our Presidency.

Throughout our Presidency, we have been involved in various international and regional meetings in order to promote the universalization of the CCM and to work on its implementation. Before going a bit further into the details of these meetings we would like to warmly thank and congratulate all states and organizations who have taken an active part to these meetings.

In April this year the Presidency convened an Intersessional Meeting that witnessed a high level of participation from signatories and non-signatories alike. From 16 – 19 April, 346 delegates from 45 States Parties, 22 signatories, 12 States not Party and 23 Organisations participated in the meeting, which I feel is indicative of the collaborative nature that has underpinned the CCM process.

Nevertheless, the sessions also highlighted areas where increased and improved efforts are still needed. In this same vein, it should also be noted that they have fuelled a dialogue between states on the specific measures and general directions required to address these matters. I will leave the Coordinators to share some of the important initiatives that they have undertaken in this regard during their respective thematic sessions.

In May, Ghana hosted an event in partnership with Togo and Zambia, a highly successful regional meeting for Sub-Saharan African States, concluding in an Action Plan on Universalization where States not yet party to our Convention have been encouraged to take all necessary steps to ratify or otherwise accede to the Convention as soon as possible. More than 34 States attended this meeting and we have

been impressed and highly encouraged by the motivation of States to go ahead in the universalization process.

Similarly, we were pleased to participate in the workshop hosted by Croatia during that same month. We commend these admirable efforts which, by the dynamism of these meetings, have been awarded the attendance of a significant number of observer states, and we look forward to further regional efforts displaying the same level of dynamism and vociferous commitment to the humanitarian principles underlining our collective endeavours. The dynamism and enthusiasm mentioned above is reflected in the achievements reported by States and captured by the Oslo Progress Report.

On a national level, Lebanon is pleased to briefly provide you with an overview of the situation in 2012. Between 2011 and 2012, we have gracefully received support of some 18 million USD of which 8.6 million USD have been allocated thus far and would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who so kindly assist us in these endeavours. These contributions have allowed us to continue to develop the on-going projects most of which has gone to clearance. We are therefore pleased to report on good progress made in clearing contaminated areas and want to ensure all parties that we aim to finish our obligations with regards to clearance well within the deadline.

Lebanon is also eager to collaborate and share our experiences to further broaden our capacity as well as that of others. On Victim Assistance, Lebanon provides Mine Victim Assistance and works on several levels to improve the socio-economic re-integration of mine victims, including: providing prosthetic devices and related maintenance; securing needed rehabilitation services and home adaptation; Empowering landmine survivors and building their capacities and promoting income generating initiatives and the provision of facilitated loans.

Last but not least, we would like to share with you the review of our national legislation as reported at the Intersessional meeting with the aim to identify the gaps in existing legislation related to the implementation of the CCM. It is our intention to now be able to introduce a Bill implementing the required changes to our national legislation within 2013.

Lebanon wishes to continue its active work for the universalization of the CCM and have identified numerous opportunities to this end including a lunch for Arab Ambassadors or Iftar which in August gathered around 50 people from various organizations. The attendance of 19 Arab States at the 2MSP and the high attendance of Arab States to this meeting is a high factor of further encouragements.

Mr. President,

Globally, we have seen a significant increase in the number of States parties since the 2MSP, as we now stand at 75 States that have ratified or acceded to the CCM. In this respect, I would like to congratulate [Sweden, Togo, Hungary, Cameroun and Switzerland], as the [5] most recent States to have join the Convention since the Intersessional Meeting in April.¹ I am confident that this number will continue to grow and we look forward to welcoming new states in due course.

If we are to eradicate the global threat posed by these weapons and their truly abhorrent effects on civilian populations and demining personnel alike, the destruction of the millions of sub munitions currently held in national stockpiles across the globe is a task that we must address with great effort and haste. The implementation of Article 3 of the CCM has already been marked by steady progress. Some 11 States

¹ Other states since the 2MSP: Swaziland (13 Sep 11), Trinidad and Tobago (21 Sep 11), Italy (21 Sep 11), Czech Republic (22 Sep 11), Dominican Republic (20 Dec 11), Mauritania (1 Feb 12), Côte d'Ivoire (12 March 12), Honduras (21 March 12).

parties have declared stockpile destruction completion², eight of those having done so before the Convention entered into force for them. Among another nine States parties³ who declared obligations to destroy stockpiles of cluster munitions under Article 3 of the Convention, four⁴ have begun physical destruction of stockpiles, while all others have stated that they have destruction plans in place or are in the process of developing concrete implementation plans.

Of course, in addition to the preventive efforts taking place within the framework of the Convention, work is on-going on the ground to deal with the impact of those weapons already deployed. Four States⁵ have undertaken efforts to develop and implement national plans, including new methods for technical survey, base line survey and data collection.

We are also encouraged by the fact that States have already begun to utilize the forum of the CCM as a platform for encouraging International Cooperation and Assistance. Several States parties and signatories have indicated that they have needs for assistance, particularly with regards to fulfilling clearance, stockpile destruction, and victim assistance obligations. The Convention provides a framework in which this can be achieved effectively, making the best use of the resources that are available throughout the Treaty membership. We urge those States working to fulfil their obligations under the Convention to continue to detail their resourcing gaps.

Distinguished colleagues,

We believe that the new President will continue to spur on this momentum, at a time where there still remains work to be done. Indeed, despite the great gains that have just been spoken of, we must continue to work with the same vigour and collaborative spirit that has driven this process forward thus far. We would like to thank all States parties for the level of support and engagement throughout our Presidency.

It has been an honour to assume this role, with the aim of eliminating the threat of a weapon that has impacted the lives of too many Lebanese civilians. I am convinced that this global partnership will put an end to prevent any potential future suffering caused by cluster munitions, and Lebanon will remain a committed and energetic partner in this regard until that goal has been realised.

Thank you

² Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czech Republic, Ecuador, Montenegro, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Slovenia and Spain.

³ Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, France, FYR of Macedonia, Germany, Japan, Netherlands, United Kingdom.

⁴ France, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

⁵ Chad, Montenegro, Lao PDR and Lebanon.