



Federal Republic of Germany
Foreign Office

**SECOND MEETING OF STATES PARTIES
TO THE CONVENTION ON CLUSTER MUNITIONS**

Beirut, 13 September 2011

General Statement

Detlev Wolter, Head of Division for Conventional Disarmament

Madam President,

Germany aligns itself with the statement just delivered by the EU.

Since I take the floor for the first time, let me welcome you to the chair and express my heartfelt gratitude to the government of Lebanon for organizing and hosting this important Second Meeting of State Parties of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. I also want to welcome the representatives of observer states present in this room and express the hope that they will ratify or accede to the convention very soon.

Universalisation remains a key objective to rid the world of cluster munitions.

The Convention on Cluster Munitions is a remarkable and unique achievement, both for international disarmament and international humanitarian law as well as more generally for promoting humanitarian and development cooperation. Our convention is proof that progress in disarmament is possible.

Since we last met in Vientiane, the Convention has strengthened its significance as both a disarmament as well as a humanitarian instrument through an increased

membership as well as through the strong commitment of States Parties in implementing their obligations. The Beirut Progress Report demonstrates: Implementation of the Vientiane Action Plan is well on track. As “Friend of the President” on stockpile destruction, Germany was impressed by the tremendous determination and commitment of both States Parties as well as a number of signatories to ensure the timely completion of the destruction process. Like others, Germany has made a political commitment to complete destruction well in advance of its initial eight-year deadline. The strong start of the Convention in the field of stockpile destruction creates an encouraging momentum for the accomplishment of the ambitious disarmament goal of the Convention.

Significant progress has also been made in clearance, victim assistance and cooperation and assistance.

But in contrast to these positive developments, we also had to witness setbacks. For Germany as a strong proponent of comprehensive prohibitions on cluster munitions that go beyond the current membership of the Convention, any use of cluster munitions, given their indiscriminate nature and the unacceptable harm they cause for the civilian population, is of grave concern. The reported instances of use of cluster munitions in recent months clearly run contrary to our cause: to end for all time the suffering caused by these weapons. We need to strengthen our efforts to effectively discourage any use of cluster munitions by any actor.

Madam President,

In 2011, Germany continues to provide broad funding to assist affected states in fulfilling their obligations and to solve the problems that cluster munitions cause long after the conflict is over. In our host country Lebanon, as we have seen during the impressive field trip yesterday, these projects bear fruit and open the door for sustainable development of the affected regions. Germany is privileged to continue its

bilateral support for Lebanon in ERW clearance and related development projects – in total about 2.3 million € in the last 10 years. Today in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Columbia, Laos and Viet Nam unexploded or abandoned ordnance and cluster munitions cause more casualties than landmines. The clearance programmes funded by Germany aim at creating a safe environment for the local population by tackling threats from cluster munitions, landmines and other explosive remnants of war. The German support also covers funding for victim assistance. This includes tailored measures which survivors of landmine or ERW accidents directly benefit from, like physical rehabilitation. In a broader context, the German development cooperation follows an integrated approach.

Madam President,

Germany is convinced that this Second Meeting of States Parties will represent an important achievement on three central pillars:

- 1 – It provides us with an opportunity to assess the progress we made in implementing our Convention through the Vientiane Action Plan, our road map for the years to come.
- 2 – It enables us to raise our awareness of the challenges that lie ahead, including on institutional matters, and to jointly identify ways how best to address them.
- 3 – It allows us to create an effective, efficient and sustainable implementation architecture. In other words: This Meeting has the potential to become the doorstep into a new era in the life of the Convention, namely towards its sustained and successful implementation.

On all these tasks, we wish you and all participants best success!

Thank you, Madam President.