

**Statement by the Lao PDR
on International Cooperation and Assistance
6th Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions
5-7 September 2016, Geneva**

Madam President,

My delegation wishes to begin by expressing our appreciation to Australia and Iraq, coordinators on cooperation and assistance for their hard work.

The Lao PDR considers that significant progress has been made in the implementation of the Convention. These achievements came as a result of collaboration, cooperation and assistance among States Parties, Signatory States, and supportive States to the Convention, as well as organizations and stakeholders from the civil society, all of whom have committed to achieving a world free from cluster munitions. Without this collaboration and mutual support, we may not have accomplished the achievements made to date. In this regards, cooperation and assistance are essential elements to realizing the objectives of the Convention.

Distinguished delegates,

The cooperation and assistance in the implementation of the Convention in the Lao PDR has taken in various forms.

On multilateral cooperation, the government of the Lao PDR and UNDP has established a multilateral UXO Trust Fund to mobilize financial support for the UXO-specific national institutions including National Regulatory Authority for UXO/Mine Action Sector in Lao PDR (NRA) and the Lao National Unexploded Ordnance Programme (UXO Lao). Since the establishment of the Trust Fund, Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, European Union, Luxemburg and Belgium have contributed more than 28 million USD. Recently, the Republic of Korea has also contributed to the fund.

The UNDP Project supporting the Trust Fund is now in its final months of implementation. A new project is currently in the process of being developed. This project will consider the National Survey Strategy ‘From Survey to Safety’ and take into account the requirements for a more robust legislative, better planning, enhanced information systems.

At bilateral level, the Lao Government has been working with the United States, Japan, China and Norway. In 2015, the United States has provided more than 10 million USD to the UXO sector in the Lao PDR which covers UXO Lao’s operations in 6 UXO-contaminated provinces in the southern part of the Lao PDR and funding for clearance by INGOs. Japan has contributed more than 4.5 million USD to the UXO sector and

conducted a trial project to develop new technology for UXO clearance. In addition, the Lao PDR receives victim assistance equipment which is equivalent to million Yuan from China. Recently, a new joint-project on technical survey between Norway and UXO Lao in the northern of Laos has also been initiated.

Madam President,

Yesterday, during the historical visit, the President of the US announced 90 million USD to support Laos in addressing UXO problem. We hereby appreciate the commitment shown by the US government.

Distinguished delegates,

There are more than 10 non-profit and civil society operators active in the UXO sector benefitting from a funding support of more than 21 million USD. In addition, there are 13 national and international commercial operators with more than 8 million USD of funding.

The Lao PDR has developed a nationalized SDG 18 which is an enhancement to the Lao PDR's localized MDG 9 and the 8th National Social-Economic Development Plan. SDG 18 has ambitious aims designed to support Lao people who are living in UXO contaminated communities. The launching of SDG 18 ceremony is being held today in Vientiane witnessing by the Prime Minister of the Lao PDR, the United Nations Secretary General, Ministers, diplomatic corps, authorities and organizations concerned. Correspondingly, during lunch time today, I have the honor to invited to speak about SDG 18 at the side event organized by UNDP. I hereby would like to invite all delegates to attend the side event.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Lao PDR re-emphasizes that cooperation and assistance are essential to implementing the CCM. States Parties must also appreciate the value of the Article 6 of the Convention in helping other States Parties to address the problems of cluster munitions. Affected countries may not meet the obligations enshrined in the Convention without significant international support.

Thank you for your kind attention.