

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

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Mr. President,  
Excellencies,

At the outset, I would like to extend my sincere congratulation to your Excellency Mr Henk Cor van der Kwast, Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva on your election as President of the Sixth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions. I am confident that under your able leadership, our meeting will be guided to a successful conclusion. I also wish on behalf of my delegation to express sincere thanks to the coordinators on Universalization, Ecuador and Zambia, for their tireless efforts in undertaking this important work.

Since our first Review Conference, four countries have joined the Convention. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate their accessions. The increased number of State Parties is a sign that the international norm of prohibiting cluster munitions is increasingly accepted.

As one of the most affected countries, Lao PDR has witnessed the painful impact of UXOs. To date, they remain as a threat to innocent people including children who are the future of the country. We, therefore, urge those countries that have not yet joined the Convention to do so as soon as possible.

Dear Colleagues,

Since the entry into force of CCM, our government takes any possible opportunity to promote the convention domestically, regionally and internationally.

At a national level, the Lao Government raises public awareness on UXOs through media as well as integrating UXO awareness into educational programs at schools. Furthermore, as traditional practice, we commemorate the entry into force of the Convention on every first of August.

In light of MDG 9 -specific MDG for Laos aiming at reducing UXO impact -, the Lao Government will launch in Vientiane in the two coming days the SDG 18 which will be a localized SDG for Laos focusing on freeing the country from UXOs. Taking an opportunity as a host of the ASEAN Regional Summit, the launch of SDG 18 will be held in the context of this important regional event and witnessed by Prime Minister of the Lao PDR, UN Secretary General,

Ministers as well as ASEAN family and development partners, donors and related International Organizations active in Laos.

At international level, the call for the universalization of the CCM has been conveyed each year by our head of delegation to UN General Assembly. Such message will again be included in this year statement.

Distinguished delegates,

Lao PDR will continue to actively promote the universalization of the Convention in order to prevent any further loss of humankind caused by UXOs. We congratulate those countries who have shown their commitment by joining the Convention and encourage them to fulfill their obligations provided therein. Most importantly, we would like once again to take this opportunity to call up on those countries that have not yet acceded to the Convention to do so in order to achieve a world free from cluster munitions.

Thank you Mr. President