

Statement by
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“on International Cooperation and Assistance”
At 7th Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions
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Mr President,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

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

The Lao PDR considers that substantial progress has been made in the implementation of the Convention in the country. These achievements are resulted by an extensive collaboration, cooperation and assistance among States Parties, Signatory, and supportive States to the Convention, as well as international organizations and stakeholders from the civil society, all of whom have expressed their strong will and commitment in achieving a world free from cluster munitions. These productive dynamics and extensive mutual support have enabled us to achieve a better implementation of the Convention. We therefore believe that cooperation and assistance are key 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 through multilateral and bilateral arrangement.

Firstly, through multilateral arrangement, the UXO Trust Fund was established in 2010 and had received contributions from various donor countries over the past 6 years to support the Implementation of the Convention. Recently, the Trust Fund has been replaced by a new multilateral project signed by the Government of Lao PDR and UNDP entitled ‘Moving towards achieving SDG 18 - Removing the UXO Obstacle to Development in the Lao PDR’. The objective is to support the National Regulatory Authority and UXO Lao for the next 5 years in carrying out their

activities with the support of Canada, Ireland, Luxembourg, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea and the European Union.

Secondly, through bilateral arrangement, the Lao Government has been working closely with the United States, Japan and Norway. In 2017, the United States has provided funding to the UXO Lao's operations in 6 UXO-contaminated provinces in the southern part and to the INGOs' clearance activities. Japan has been one of our long-standing partner in UXO sector for more than 20 years and is currently conducting a trial project to develop new technology for UXO clearance which will escalate the clearance rate up to 10-20 percent. Norway, as a committed partner, has been supporting UXO sector in our country since 90s. Currently, Norway is working in partnership with UXO Lao to initiate a new phase of assistance focusing on survey, clearance and risk education in the provinces in needed.

Mr President,

During his visit in 2016, President Obama pledged for a total of 90 million USD over a three-year period to continue to support clearances through UXO Lao and other INGOs, who will work in partnership with UXO Lao, in conducting the national cluster munitions survey. This national cluster munition survey will support the Government of Lao PDR's efforts to quantify the extent of contamination and support planning mechanisms for prioritizing clearances of confirmed hazardous areas. Once again, the Lao PDR would like to express its profound appreciations for this substantial contribution in UXO clearance in the Lao PDR and we hope that the United States, when fulfilling its pledge, will also make greater contribution in implementing this crucial task.

In addition, the assistance in the Lao PDR also been carried out through non-profit and private arrangements. There are approximately 6 humanitarian demining operators and 13 private companies being active in UXO sector.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Lao PDR highly value the continued cooperation and assistance as a core aspect of the Convention especially under Article 6. Affected States may not meet the obligations enshrined in the Convention without significant and increased support from other States. Once again I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the Lao Government and the people, to express our deep and sincere

appreciations to all donors countries for the continued support and assistance to the Lao PDR in addressing its daunting challenges. We hope that the assistance will be maintained and further reinforced given the numerous challenges still need to be addressed.

Thank you for your kind attention.