



Statement

by

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**International Mine Directors' Meeting Geneva**  
**Panel: The Challenges of Completion**  
**The state of play in the CCM and Country Coalitions to Promote the Implementation of the**  
**Convention on Cluster Munitions**

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I am particularly grateful for this invitation to speak on “Challenges of Completion” as Germany currently holds the Presidency of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM). The CCM, a convention which – although 10 years younger and with 119 members and signatories far less universal than the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) – is very similar in terms of its objectives, structure and membership. Both conventions share the deep humanitarian concern and thus share the objective to free the world from these weapons systems.

Unfortunately both conventions face as well the same kind of challenges concerning their implementation. For instance, if you look at completion of obligations we see a very similar pattern like the one observed in the APMBC with strong initial dynamism – “picking of low hanging fruits” – and a more complicated and protracted completion phase. Also in the CCM we are facing the challenge of extension requests which jeopardize the objectives set out in the convention, to finish stockpile destruction within 8 and land clearance within 10 years. To underline the importance of fulfilling these deadlines, the 6th Meeting of States Parties of the CCM even passed a political declaration reiterating the clear objective to achieve a world free of cluster munition in 2030.

However, in view of the fact that cluster munition affected states are geographically more concentrated but very often more deeply affected, there are some particular challenges when it comes to completing obligations under the convention. The Convention on Cluster Munitions also does not have a dedicated implementation mechanism to promote the destruction and clearance of cluster munitions in particularly affected States Parties requiring assistance. This goes as well for issues like victims assistance, land release and mine education and training for mine clearance. This requires a comprehensive and holistic approach including affected and donor states. If successful such a coordinated approach concerning destruction and clearance (including mapping and securing of contaminated areas) of cluster munitions might also assist Non States Parties in order to be in a better position to accede to the Convention thus contributing to the universalization aim of the convention.

Before this backdrop we as the CCM Presidency have undertaken the effort to elaborate a concept of establishing so called “country coalitions”. The idea is to - with a country specific focus – to set up a framework for enhancing international cooperation and thus promote the Convention on Cluster Munitions. This seems to have considerable potential both in terms of creating transparency and enhancing cohesiveness concerning mine action in a specific affected country. In such an informal framework, without the need for elaborate and costly coordination structures, the relevant actors for such a coalition would include representatives of: the affected country, donor states, international organizations, operators on the ground and other relevant experts, such as the GICHD and ICRC.

In principle the country coalitions would be coordinated by the affected country together with a donor country (lead countries) in order to promote a more comprehensive approach to the country’s specific challenges.

Such an approach should not duplicate existing bilateral, multilateral or international activities/programs for destruction and clearance of cluster munitions in general, but coordinate these activities with a focus on specific affected countries. In order not to turn this into new academic exercise but rather to from a practical angle we – with the generous assistance of the EU – are going to organize a regional workshop in Bangkok on 16 and 17 of March, as South East Asia represents the most Cluster Munition affected region in the world. We hope that the presence of the key affected states – members and not yet members of the CCM alike - with their relevant institutions, donor countries, international organizations and a number of NGOs active in the region will pave the way to the forging of some country coalitions. In order to make the effort more universal we also plan on having a dedicated regional seminar in Addis Abeba in April where we are going to raise the issues at stake in the African region.

We hope that these seminars will kick off a process which will lead to a number of informal meetings to be organized by the lead countries, assisted by other donor states, international organizations, operators on the ground and other relevant experts in order to identify

- the concrete challenges in terms of destruction and clearance of cluster munitions
- possible activities/programs to overcome these challenges
- a coalition of actors to assist the affected country in the implementation of these activities/programs.

Thus we hope as well to enhance within the purview of the Convention on Cluster Munitions as well the areas of

- Universalization
- Risk Reduction Education
- Clearance and Stockpile destruction
- International Cooperation and Assistance
- National Implementation Measures

So to summarize: completion of States Parties obligations often requires more than political engagement as some countries are facing very special challenges and problems which can only be tackled in a comprehensive, country specific approach. Such individualized solutions to Cluster Munitions problems can probably also be used in other contexts, such as the APMBC. Since the challenges concerning mine action under its various aspects (i.e. destruction and clearance as well as victim assistance, land release and mine education and training) are almost identical for both the APMBC and the CCM) I would propose for discussion if additional synergies might be found by a closer cooperation of both conventions. This is the reason why we are constantly coordinating with the respective Presidencies and Coordinators of related conventions (APMBC and CCW).