

Informal meeting on Enhancing International Cooperation and Assistance under the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM)

13:00-15:00, Friday 9 June, Room C2, World Meteorological Organisation

MEETING SUMMARY

On Friday 9 June 2017, Australia and Iraq, CCM Coordinators on International Cooperation and Assistance, hosted an informal meeting in the margins of the Intersessional Meetings of the Anti-Personnel Landmines Convention (APLC). The meeting was held as a follow-up to the informal meeting in the margins of the 20th International Meeting of National Mine Action Programme Directors and United Nations Advisers (NDM-UN) on Wednesday 8 February to provide updates on the issues raised at that meeting, and to share further their views on challenges and needs for cooperation and assistance.

Approximately 22 representatives from affected States, States with impending deadlines under the Convention and donor States participated in the meeting.

1. KEY POINTS RAISED

1.1 To guide discussions at the meeting, States were asked to consider the following questions:

- Have there been any developments since the 8 February meeting on the challenges, needs or capacities of your State with regard to international cooperation and assistance?
- What is the potential of targeted initiatives such as "country coalitions" in the CCM, or the "individualised approach" in the APLC, to enhance international cooperation and assistance between donors and affected States? Is your State open to participating in a "country coalition"?
- What can the Coordinators do to better enhance international cooperation and assistance among affected and donor States in the CCM? What are the specific challenges the Coordinators should address?
- What actions or steps should the Coordinators add to the next (2020) Action Plan to implement the provisions of the Convention, to enhance international cooperation and assistance between affected States and donors?

The following are some of the key points raised by States in response to these questions:

- There was a clear interest in holding more meetings focused on individual countries, focusing in on the needs of a country and how these might be addressed, to operationalise the Country Coalition concept.
- Such meetings facilitated better communication of information to capital and could also be held in parallel to plenary sessions at multilateral meetings to make most efficient use of time.

- There was an interest in making meetings cross-conventional (ie addressing the CCM, the APLC, and Protocol V of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons – CCW) where appropriate for the country concerned, given the synergies in addressing the challenges of different types of contamination.
- Where possible, Country Coalition meetings should be held in country with local authorities, NGOs and community representatives of the State requiring assistance, to better understand needs.
- For the Country Coalition approach to be effective, on-going dialogue between meetings was essential.
- It would be useful for the Coordinators to hold separate meetings of affected/implementing States and donor States before holding joint meetings, and in principle meetings should be held whenever possible throughout the year.
- There should be a focus on the Country Coalition approach in the next Action Plan.
- The Coordinators needed to work on more concrete actions and better tracking of their implementation to measure progress in implementation of Action Plan commitments.
- There was an interest in broader distribution of reporting on Coordinator and Coordination Committee activities.

2. DETAILED RECORD OF THE MEETING

2.1 Introductory remarks:

- Australia and Iraq, CCM Coordinators on International Cooperation and Assistance, explained that the meeting was being held as a follow-up to the informal meeting held in the margins of the 20th NDM-UN held on Wednesday 8 February, to enable States to: provide updates on the issues raised at that meeting and share further their views on challenges and needs for cooperation and assistance; provide the foundations for the establishment of enhanced partnerships between affected and donor states; and hear from States how the Coordinators could better enhance international cooperation and assistance among States Parties.

2.2 Country Coalition concept:

a) A donor/partner State said:

- The Country Coalition concept aimed to bring a country specific approach to supporting States Parties in the implementation of their CCM obligations.
- The objective was to unite all relevant actors (affected/implementing state authorities, donor/partner states, operators on the ground, other relevant experts and representatives from communities) to address CCM implementation issues (all aspects of mine action, stocks and victim assistance, land release and mine education) in an informative and collaborative framework.
- A Country Coalition should serve as a multi layered platform to allow for long term donor engagement, increasing planning security for affected/implementing countries.
- It was important to ensure Country Coalitions were coordinated by affected/implementing countries themselves, to promote national ownership.
- Practical stimulus had been provided to the Country Coalition concept through dedicated workshops with Southeast Asian countries in March 2017 in Bangkok, and with Southern European countries in Croatia on 12-13 June 2017.
- The key to Country Coalitions was national ownership. It hoped States would be active in building their own Country Coalitions.

2.3 General exchange of views:

b) A donor/partner State said:

- It supported targeting assistance to individual countries and bringing together all donors and operators and national authorities to look at what could be done to reach targets and obligations under the Convention. It was important to get countries to focus on reaching their deadlines.
- It would like to see country-focused informal meetings become a regular feature of Intersessional meetings and Meetings of States Parties.

c) An affected State said:

- It was one of the most heavily unexploded ordnance (UXO)-affected countries in the world: 1/3 of its territory (14 of its 17 provinces) was contaminated with UXO.
- Clearance of this contamination was beyond its capacity.
- International assistance through bilateral cooperation and multilateral cooperation was the key to realising clearance goals.
- There was more the Coordinators could do to promote the urgency of addressing cluster munitions contamination and to help affected/implementing States access assistance.
- To enhance dialogue and understanding on challenges, the Coordinators could hold separate meetings with affected/implementing States and donor/partner States before holding joint meetings.

d) A donor/partner State said:

- The affected State which had just spoken faced enduring challenges and was an example of a country which could benefit from an individual, tailored approach as proposed in the Country Coalition concept.
- It could be useful to establish a dedicated contact group of donors/partners to meet regularly to provide a coherent approach to supporting implementation of CCM obligations.

e) A donor/partner State said:

- The aim of approaches such as the Country Coalition concept and the Individualised Approach (in the APLC context) should be to make a difference on the ground.
- This required ongoing dialogue, including in the affected/implementing countries themselves, not just ad hoc meetings in the margins of multilateral meetings.
- The individualised or Country Coalition approach should be made a central part of the next Action Plan.
- Ideally, it should be possible to discuss the challenges of implementing obligations under both the CCM and APLC together, given the challenges and solutions were similar.

f) An affected State said:

- It had signed an agreement on a cooperation program with a donor/partner State.
- The focus of this program was socio-economic empowerment of victims.
- Donor/partner State engagement on the ground was critical – being able to take donors/partners to demining sites helped put challenges in perspective.

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- It had less than two square kilometres of territory left to be cleared of UXO so was in a completely different situation to a country like the affected State which had spoken previously.
- This highlighted the importance of adopting an individual, tailored approach – the different situations in different countries needed to be acknowledged.

g) A donor/partner State said:

- It saw merit in having combined meetings addressing challenges under both the CCM and MBC, particularly where affected/implementing States were parties to both.
- Closed-door dialogues under Chatham House rules were useful for encouraging frank discussion between donor/partner States and affected/implementing States.
- It would be helpful to have more communication under the CCM, including on the priorities of the Coordination Committee, throughout the year.
- The work of the Coordinators could be enhanced by adopting more of a “results based management” approach - identifying concrete commitments to meet, to ensure progress on points under the Action Plan could be measured.

h) The ISU said:

- The CCM already had a “results based management” model in place, in the form of the annual progress report in which the Coordinators reported against the Action Plan.
- The ISU produced quarterly updates on activities under the CCM which were circulated to all States Parties. It might be possible to arrange circulation of reports on the monthly meetings of the Coordination Committee.

i) An affected State said:

- It had 7.3 square kilometres of contaminated land remaining to be cleared, after clearing 4 square kilometres in 2016.
- It had 232 cluster munitions victims registered to date.
- There were four organisations accredited to conduct cluster munitions removal in its territory: 2 government organisations and 2 non-government organisations.
- It expected to complete clearance in 2017.

j) A donor/partner State said:

- It was interested in the idea of holding cross-conventional informal meetings focused on individual countries in the margins of Intersessional meetings and Meetings of States Parties.
- It only funded mine action through NGOs, in response to specific requests.
- The Country Coalition approach would enable a more long-term approach with a broader perspective.
- It would also serve as a useful mechanism for increasing accountability on progress. Meetings under the approach should involve NGOs and victims, and identify specific action items.

k) A State with an impending deadline under the Convention said:

- The Country Coalition approach had great potential.
- It supported the idea of seeking synergies through cross-conventional informal meetings.
- It had a 2019 deadline for destruction of its cluster munitions stockpile. It had secured the funds for the process, but was in the process of trying to find an implementing agent as the agency initially contracted for the process was unable to perform the work.

l) A donor/partner State said:

- It supported the adoption of an individualised or Country Coalition approach, not just as a policy but in implementation on the ground.
- It supported cross-conventional meetings where these were appropriate, particularly for countries that were States Parties to the CCM, APLC and Protocol V of the CCW.

m) An affected State said:

- It would be useful to continue to have regular meetings in the margins of Intersessional meetings and Meetings of States Parties. This helped keep capital-based attendees up to date with developments as sometimes information circulated intersessionally did not reach them.

n) A donor/partner State said:

- It was difficult for it to commit to a Country Coalition because of its internal processes.
- Holding meetings focused on individual States was a useful way of presenting information in a focused way for consideration in capital, and was also an attractive format for capital-based officers.
- Meetings could be held in parallel with plenary proceedings to make maximum use of the limited time available during multilateral meetings.

2.4 Concluding remarks:

o) In summary, Australia said:

- There was a clear interest in holding more meetings focused on individual countries, focusing in on the needs of a country and how these might be addressed, to operationalise the Country Coalition concept.
- Such meetings facilitated better communication of information to capital and could also be held in parallel to plenary sessions at multilateral meetings to make most efficient use of time.
- There was an interest in making meetings cross-conventional (ie addressing the CCM, APLC and CCW Protocol V) where appropriate for the country concerned, given the synergies in addressing the challenges of different types of contamination.
- Where possible, Country Coalition meetings should be held in country with local authorities, NGOs and community representatives of the State requiring assistance, to better understand needs.
- For the Country Coalition approach to be effective, on-going dialogue between meetings was essential.
- It would be useful for the Coordinators to hold separate meetings of affected/implementing States and donor States before holding joint meetings, and in principle meetings should be held whenever possible throughout the year.
- There should be a focus on the Country Coalition approach in the next Action Plan.

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- The Coordinators needed to work on more concrete actions and better tracking of their implementation to measure progress in implementation of Action Plan commitments.
- There was an interest in broader distribution of reporting on Coordinator and Coordination Committee activities.
- The Coordinators would put together an informal summary of the present informal meeting and circulate it to participants for input. A sanitised version would be put up on the website.
- The Coordinators would explore the possibility of a further meeting in the margins of the Meeting of States Parties.