

Statement by the Head of the Viet Nam's Delegation

H.E. Ambassador NGUYEN Trung Thanh,

Permanent Representative of Viet Nam

to the United Nations in Geneva

08 September 2015

Mr. President,

Ladies and gentlemen,

At the outset, on behalf of the Vietnamese Delegation, I would like to express gratitude and appreciation to the Government of Croatia for your excellent hospitality and arrangement in your peaceful and historic city of Dubrovnik and for your leadership in the area of cluster munitions clearance. Also allow me to express our high appreciation and warm congratulations to H.E. Mr. Manuel A. González Sanz, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica, and the Government of Costa Rica for their valuable contributions made during Costa Rica's presidency over the last year.

Mr. President,

Peace has another name, i.e. Viet Nam. The reason is obvious. Viet Nam consistently supports the disarmament process, of which the highest priority is non-proliferation towards comprehensive and absolute elimination of weapons of mass destruction. Having been devastated by the protracted and brutal wars, Viet Nam not only opposes the inhuman use of all kind of weapons but also experiences tremendous losses and destructions of human life and challenges to the post-conflict reconstruction. In that spirit, Viet Nam has signed and seriously implemented more than 40 multilateral and bilateral conventions and treaties related to disarmament and arms control.

Mr. President,

Viet Nam supports the aim of the Cluster Munitions Convention (CCM) to end unacceptable harm to innocent civilians caused by cluster munitions. And, it is noteworthy that humanitarian and development aspects of the issue are taken into

account in the Convention. We are glad to see encouraging progress in the implementation of the CCM over the past five years in terms of universalization, destruction of storage and stockpile, victim assistance and clearance of affected lands, as reflected in the Croatia Progress Report.

However, a number of important obligations under the Convention present great difficulties to the implementation. As the domestic consultation goes on, one of the major concerns is the ability to meet the clearance obligation under Article 4 of the Convention. Despite creating basis for future international cooperation, the Convention still lays the disproportional responsibilities of victim assistance and remnants clearance firstly on the affected countries, most of which are developing countries. In addition, the Convention sets a maximum time-limit of only 15 years for a Member State to carry out the clearance and destruction of cluster munitions remnants on its territory. Nevertheless, in the best scenario, it may take Viet Nam more than a hundred years and an enormous amount of many billions of dollars to do this on the 6.6 million hectares of contaminated land.

Mr. President,

Being an observer to the Convention as we are, for many years Vietnam has carried out many policies, guidelines and actions to address the post-war consequences of bombs and mines, most notable is the adoption of a comprehensive national action plan for the 2010-2025 period, and the recent establishment of the National Steering Committee on bomb and mine which is directly chaired by the Prime Minister and the establishment of Viet Nam National Mine Action Center (VNMAC). We are also taking final steps to complete a national map of bomb and mine contamination for public announcement in the fourth quarter of this year. For the next 5 years 2016-2020, we are planning to carry out 52 projects on post-war bomb and mine clearance in 12 most affected provinces, with a total area of more than 170.000 hectares and an estimated cost of more than USD 273 million equivalent.

At the same time, we commit ourselves politically and practically to improving the livelihood of victims by providing treatment and assisting them with their social and economic re-integration into the society. This is a clear indication of the

Vietnamese Government's strong determination and commitment to eliminate these dangerous weapons and to victim support.

In terms of international cooperation and assistance in the last decades, Viet Nam has received significant support from many countries such as Japan, the United States, Switzerland, Norway, Germany, Australia, UK, Republic of Korea, and Hungary. Keen interest to promote cooperation has been expressed by other countries like Finland, France, Sweden... International organizations such as UNDP, UNICEF, UNWOMEN, GICHD, International Center (IC), NPA, Golden West, etc., are also working with Viet Nam through the implementation of humanitarian mine action programs, provision of equipment, facilities, and trainings on technical and institutional capacity development. We have produced a list of projects in these areas for the 2016-2020 period for possible cooperation. We would most appreciate the kind attention and positive consideration of the international community.

Mr. President,

I wish to take this opportunity to express our deep gratitude and full appreciation to all international partners who have made invaluable contributions to this noble and humanitarian endeavor. Viet Nam welcomes and is willing to cooperate with all partners in the field of detection, clearance of cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war as well as victim assistance. We appreciate most highly further exchange of views, information and best practices with all relevant stakeholders. Such cooperation and assistance would help facilitate the process of reviewing and considering the Convention.

Thank you!