



“Review of the operation and status of the Convention and other matters important for achieving the aims of the Convention”

Convention on Cluster Munitions

**2nd Review Conference, Part I
25-27 November 2020**

Statement by the Mines Advisory Group

Check against delivery

Thank you, Mr President.

MAG associates itself with the remarks of the Gender Working Group.

In our own capacity, I want to extend our appreciation to you and the ISU for your persistence and flexibility during this challenging year. While this may not be the Review Conference any of us had hoped for, we remain optimistic that when we meet again next year, it will be in a format that can fully realise the potential of the convention.

Because, Mr President, there is a great deal worth celebrating. This convention’s impact in communities where MAG works has been extraordinary. Since the close of the first Review Conference in Dubrovnik five years ago, MAG alone has cleared nearly 150,000 sub-munitions in 10 countries, and provided risk education to 2.4 million people in cluster munition-affected countries. Parents who grew up living in fear of these weapons can now watch their children grow up freely and in safety. What a tremendous change that is – and what an enormous responsibility to make it happen for every affected community.

MAG commends all states-parties for their work thus far to develop the outcome documents for the Review Conference. The draft Lausanne Action Plan builds upon the many important accomplishments of the Oslo Action Plan of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention – especially with regard to evidence-based survey and clearance, gender mainstreaming, and inclusive risk education. This consistency of approach is not only right but necessary, since so many states-parties are challenged by both cluster munitions and landmines. Though the Action Plan will not be adopted until next year, MAG encourages states-parties to start implementing its proposed actions now, in order not to lose precious time. We are ready to give all necessary support.

MAG is also hopeful that the disruption of this year’s conference will not derail progress towards universalisation. The new use of cluster munitions this year by states-not-party has been shocking, and reminds us that we cannot rest in advancing the Convention and its norms. We look forward to working with the current and incoming presidency, and with our partners in the Global Protection Cluster, to advocate for universalisation in the coming year.

Mr. President, it would be remiss not to acknowledge the commitment of States already party to the Convention in a year that has presented new and complex challenges. MAG’s government partners in our countries of operation have been unwavering in their efforts to minimise disruption to

humanitarian mine action operations throughout the pandemic. We would like, in particular, to recognise achievements in Lebanon this year, despite the obstacles created by Covid-19 and the tragedy that occurred in Beirut on the fourth of August. In addition to continued operational progress, the submission of a strong extension request is a key step towards defining and achieving the 2025 target for Article 4 completion. We thank the Lebanon Mine Action Centre for their dedication and valued partnership.

To keep this momentum in Lebanon and elsewhere, continued funding to humanitarian mine action is essential. MAG acknowledges that the global context also presents difficulties for donor states. We welcome the overall continuity of funding commitments this year and call up on donors to sustain efforts to protect international cooperation and assistance to humanitarian mine action.

To conclude, Mr President, despite a difficult year, there is much to reflect on and even more to aspire to. We are ready to support you in bringing this Review Conference to a successful close next year.

I thank you.

ENDS