

**Cluster Munition Coalition Statement on Survey and Clearance  
Convention on Cluster Munitions 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of States Parties  
Oslo, 13 September 2012**



Thank you, Mr. President.

The Cluster Munition Coalition is pleased to see that several States Parties have moved swiftly to implement their obligations under Article 4 of the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

First of all, there is the good news that four States Parties (Albania, Grenada, Guinea-Bissau, and Zambia) have completed survey and clearance of cluster munition remnants, showing that in states with relatively small amounts of contamination, the work can be completed quickly. We also welcome the information that signatories Republic of Congo and Uganda, as well as non-signatory Thailand, have finished clearing their only known cluster-munition-contaminated areas.

In addition, many States Parties and signatories have been conducting survey to obtain a better understanding of the extent of the problem. General surveys are finished in three States Parties (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Norway) and ongoing or planned in three others (Afghanistan, Germany, and Lao PDR). More directed surveys are ongoing, planned or under discussion in Chile, Lebanon, Mauritania, and Montenegro.

We encourage all affected states to conduct non-technical and technical survey at the outset of their operations in order to be able to focus clearance assets on confirmed hazardous areas from the beginning. At the same time, it is important to stress that survey should not be considered a one-time event, and that states should strive to always have a current overview of their problem and not rely on old or outdated information. Only in this way will they be able to track their progress toward full compliance with Article 4.

Many states are also continuing to clear contaminated areas at a solid pace. *Cluster Munition Monitor* reports that in 2011 at least 55 square kilometers were cleared of cluster munition remnants, with more than 52,000 unexploded submunitions destroyed. This includes clearance in States Parties and signatories Croatia, Iraq, Lao PDR, Lebanon, and Norway. And this is only part of the overall picture, since we know reporting is incomplete. But by now *every* affected State Party should already have started clearance.

There is no excuse for delaying implementation of Article 4 – delays that can be counted in avoidable casualties. We can and we must move more rapidly to make deaths and injuries from submunitions a thing of the past.

Indeed, as my colleague from NPA described earlier, in only a small minority of states—Cambodia, Iraq, Lao PDR, and Vietnam— will clearance take a large number of years. The vast majority of other contaminated states can complete this task in less than five years.

After all, according to the clearance operators that are part of the CMC, the survey and clearance of cluster munition-only contaminated areas should be faster than clearance of mine contaminated land. Survey personnel can usually walk into contaminated areas to conduct non-technical survey, a luxury that they are not afforded with respect to mine clearance. In addition, the metal content of submunitions makes them easier to detect than most antipersonnel mines.

Finally, by using land release methodologies developed for cluster munition contamination, clearance resources can be deployed on confirmed contaminated areas, clearing actual strike areas, not polygons of suspected hazardous areas.

In summary, Mr. President, the CMC would like to underline the following principles: the efficient implementation of Article 4 relies on a) good surveys, both non-technical and technical, to establish the real extent of the problem, and b) prioritized clearance efforts, using the most efficient funding regimes and updated technical and clearance methods that are focused on clearing only confirmed cluster-munition-contaminated areas. We congratulate those states that are already respecting such principles. We call on all other affected states to initiate survey and clearance without further delay and adopt the techniques that will help them meet their Article 4 obligations well ahead of their deadlines.

Thank you.