



Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

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Speech II

Update on Clearance and Risk Education

Oslo, Norway

Speech II – Update on Clearance and Risk Education

Excellencies,

Distinguished colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since the last meeting in Beirut in 2011, the Government of Afghanistan has made some progress in order to meet its obligation against the convention on cluster munitions.

As a result of ongoing conflicts since 1979, Afghanistan has become one of the heavily landmine and other explosive remnants of war affected countries in the world. There are more than 5,600 hazardous areas that need to be cleared. The estimated size of the remaining contamination is about 612 sq km, located in 1,847 communities in about 33 out of 34 provinces of the country. In addition to extensively using landmines and leaving behind ERW, warring factions in Afghanistan left behind considerable cluster munitions hazards mainly in the residential areas or in the areas that are vital for livelihoods.

According to the national database, 180 areas have been reported as contaminated with Cluster Munitions. To date, 158 cluster munitions contaminated sites have been cleared by the Implementing Partners of the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan and a total of 284,413 unexploded cluster munitions were found and destroyed. As per available records there are 22 cluster munitions contaminated sites covering an estimated area of 7.6 sq km and directly impacting 13 communities are yet to be addressed. This contamination has blocked access to about 760 hectares of agriculture and grazing land and threatens the lives of about 1,930 people.

We look forward to an Afghanistan free of mines and ERW including Cluster Munitions, where people can walk safely across their fields and land is returned to productive use, contributing to stability, economic development and a better future.

Thank you