

Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions  
General Exchange of Views

Statement by Mr. Edward Lajoie, Assistant Project Manager and Research Specialist for the Center for International Stabilization and Recovery

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Director of the Center for International Stabilization and Recovery at James Madison University, I would like to thank the Government of Norway for organizing this important meeting, and for the opportunity to be present at this event which is so critical to shaping a better world.

While James Madison University currently hosts more than 20,000 students majoring in 109 degree programs, it is internationally most well-known for the Center for International Stabilization and Recovery, otherwise known as CISR. I work as an Assistant Project Manager and Research Specialist at CISR, which for more than 15 years has served practitioners and those affected by conflict and trauma through countless personal exchanges, publications, conferences and trainings. Since 2010, CISR has expanded its areas of activity to bring innovative and reliable programs and information to more people and more ways.

At CISR we publish the Journal of ERW and Mine Action which is a forum for humanitarian mine action and explosive remnants of war clearance best practices and methodologies, strategic planning, mine risk education, survivor's assistance, and peer-reviewed research and development. The Journal began in 1997 and is the longest continuous source of information on ERW and mine action in the world. We have a circulation of more than 1,900, two thirds of which are outside of the United States. The publication is read either in print or online in over 160 countries. It is an essential information source for the community most concerned with cluster munitions.

CISR also hosts one of the most extensive websites for information clearinghouse for the mine action/ERW and post-conflict recovery communities. The website contains vital databases such as the Global Mine Action Registry, Lessons Learned Databases and the ORDATA Ordnance ID Tool as well as an extensive research library. ORDATA is an especially useful database containing information for the identification, recovery, transport and disposal of over 5,000 ordnance items including submunitions.

On the ground, CISR's Peer Support and Victim Assistance Programs focus on the human response to traumatic experiences, and how active listening, empathy and understanding can facilitate the natural recovery processes resulting from traumatic events. CISR also provides training to victims of conflict and trauma to become counselors to others who are also suffering.

CISR also hosts the prestigious Senior Management Training Courses that work to improve management skills among national managers of mine action programs. The SMC's focus includes building competencies in the areas of strategic planning, leadership, operational planning and resource management, personnel management, and decision making and problem solving. These traditional business management topics are tailored to the specific context of ERW and mine action programs, and are supplemented by sessions on conventional weapons destruction, physical security and stockpile management, and other emerging topics in the post-conflict recovery field. The courses draw on the expertise of faculty from James Madison University, particularly its College of Business. To date, CISR has hosted 8 training courses and has graduated nearly 200 senior managers, some of whom are participating in this historic meeting

I would like to reaffirm CISR's commitment to alleviating the negative humanitarian effects of UXO, landmines and cluster munitions around the world. In closing, we look forward to continuing our support to the UXO and Mine action communities and making the world secure for everyone to the earth in safety.

Thank you