

Fourth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions
Statement by Japan on International Cooperation and Assistance

12 September, 2013

Mr. President,
Co-chairs,

On behalf of the Delegation of Japan, I would like to thank the Mexican and Swedish coordinators for their hard work and preparations for this Working Group.

As a State Party to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), and the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, Japan encourages countries affected by cluster munitions and other UXOs to implement their treaty obligations.

In financial year 2012 (2012 April to March 2013), the government of Japan allocated approximately 57 million US dollars for over 41 projects in 22 countries for landmine/UXO action, including victim assistance and mine risk education. The scope of “Mine Action” includes landmines, cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war. In 2012, the top recipients of assistance from Japan were Lao PDR, African-led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA), Afghanistan, Mozambique and Cambodia. Lebanon and Mauritania also received funds for cluster munitions clearance. The total amount of Japan’s assistance provided since 1998 is approximately 526 million USD in more than 49 countries and regions.

In FY 2012, Japan supported 5 projects in Lao PDR which amounted to a total of 15 million US dollars. Japan’s substantial commitment towards Lao PDR reflects our strong resolve to assist the country most seriously affected by cluster munitions. From 2012 – 2014, Japan allocated grant aid to fund projects for mine clearance projects, the dispatch of an UXO expert, equipment procurement, and a 3-year triangular cooperation project between the Cambodia Mine Action Center (CMAC) and the UXO Lao.

Japan also provided funding to international organizations such as UNMAS, UNICEF, UNDP and the ICRC. In the FY 2012 (April 2012 to March 2013), Japan contributed around 26.4 million US dollars to the UN Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF) directed to Afghanistan, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Republic of Congo, DR Congo, and Libya. Through the VTF we have also earmarked financial support to the development of the GICHD cluster munitions identification tool.

With regard to victim assistance, we acknowledge that access to primary (health) care and improving the quality of its services are important challenges to some affected countries due to accidents generally occurring in rural areas. From this perspective, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) embarked on a 6 year technical assistance project in Colombia which began in 2007 and recently ended in 2012. Throughout this period, Japan provided funding and dispatched experts to strengthen the rehabilitation system for persons with disabilities, especially for victims of landmines and UXOs. Through this project, the following outcomes were achieved:

- 1) the capacity for rehabilitation experts have been enhanced
- 2) guidelines have been created for the rehabilitation of amputees and visually impaired victims
- 3) the knowledge regarding victims' rights and the services they are entitled to have been promoted

Since primary care and rehabilitation for victims end at the hospital, the long-term needs of victims need to be addressed in order to improve their livelihoods. Bearing this in mind, it is necessary for governments to take specific measures such as preparing a national reparation system or social insurance system, vocational training, as well as other measures to ensure participation in order to achieve full social inclusion for all victims of conflict. Ultimately, the key to success is about improving systems in medical, welfare, education, infrastructure, employment, etc. under strong national ownership. Taking this opportunity, we wish to express our respect and appreciation in the efforts by Colombia for taking an initiative in these regards. We hope that such good practices will be shared and promoted to other UXO affected countries whenever possible.

Some States Parties have a long way to go to implement its obligations under the Convention. We hope that a concerted effort by all partners and an enhanced national ownership will help States Parties of the CCM in reaching their treaty obligations in an effective and timely manner.

Thank you.