

**Cluster Munition Coalition Statement on International Cooperation and Assistance  
Convention on Cluster Munitions 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties  
Lusaka, 12 September 2013**



I am pleased to represent the Cluster Munition Coalition's views on international cooperation and assistance. I am from Lebanon, a state that continues to depend on the support of our international partners to clear the heavy cluster munition contamination we suffered and to support the victims of these indiscriminate weapons.

The CMC would like to make four main points today, drawn from the experience of states like Lebanon.

First, we would like to recall that international cooperation and assistance is a **clear legal obligation** under the Convention on Cluster Munitions for all states in a position to provide it. Under Article 6, "each State Party *has the right* to seek and receive assistance," and those in a position to do so "*shall provide* technical, material, and financial assistance." Given the wide variety of support that can be given, including sharing of experience, information, and expertise, most countries are in a position to assist other States Parties and therefore have a legal duty to do so. The Convention also clearly applies this requirement to clearance, victim assistance and stockpile destruction. But the limited information on available donor support shows that more states could be making an effort to contribute across all sectors.

Our second message is that **partnership is central to the success of the Convention**, including the implementation of Article 6. The Convention was born out of a joint effort by states affected by cluster munitions and other states and organizations, and partnership has been central to getting the Convention adopted, building its membership, and advocating for its early implementation. But partnership can and must go even further. States Parties and other stakeholders need to continue working closely together not just in the international arena, but at the national level to discuss and address implementation progress and challenges. We have heard from states like Norway and Switzerland that progress on the ground depends on this type of regular and strategic collaboration among the affected state, one or more donors, and other international actors providing support, and we fully agree. This would include jointly identifying the most relevant activities for international support.

Third, as an integral element of partnership, affected states should **recognize that certain duties come along with the right to assistance**. Such duties include actions like adopting appropriate laws, policies, and mechanisms so that funds and other resources are used in the most efficient manner; properly assessing the work to be done and developing clear plans to carry it out; communicating plans and requirements clearly to international

partners; and providing as much national resources as possible. Demonstrating national ownership in these and other ways will build confidence with donors and facilitate an effective partnership.

Finally, partnership means that **states or other actors giving assistance should provide timely, relevant, and reliable support** – especially for those states showing strong national ownership. Affected states that have effectively identified the tasks and have a solid work plan often rely on international support to fulfil those plans. Lebanon, for example, has a clear plan to clear all cluster munition contamination by 2016, but recent shortfalls in funding and a subsequent decline in clearance capacity are putting its implementation at risk.

As well, states in a position to provide financial assistance should go far beyond simply writing a check. As Switzerland noted at the intersessional meetings this year, “Fund and forget” is not an option. They should make sure to use the most effective and efficient funding channels and processes so that support arrives in a timely, cost-efficient, and reliable manner. Those donors that choose to mainstream support for clearance or victim assistance through larger development budgets should also, with the affected state, ensure the funds are ultimately getting to the communities in need. And again, states should commit to working closely at the political and technical level with the affected state to ensure the funds are spent in a timely and cost-efficient manner. For example, states conducting clearance should make sure to use proper survey techniques and conduct clearance only on confirmed hazardous areas.

In sum, Madame President, realizing the full promise of the Convention relies on continued collaboration among all actors, including through the provision of financial, material and technical resources. We need to remember that Article 6 is not just about assistance, but also *cooperation*.

Thank you.