

Ireland
Clearance and Risk Education
5th Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster
Munitions
4th September 2014

Mr President

I wish to express Ireland's thanks to Switzerland and Lao PDR, for leading the work on Clearance and Risk Education over the past year.

The rapid adoption and entry into force of the Convention has had an energising impact on the clearance community. Success in the clearance and the release of contaminated land is a concrete demonstration of the value of our Convention to the populations of affected areas and the continuing success of clearance operations can only help to promote universalisation.

The 4 MSP welcomed a paper prepared by Lao PDR and Ireland on *Effective Steps for the Clearance of Cluster Munitions* which built on the excellent paper on *Implementation of Article 4*, presented by Australia to the 2 MSP in Beirut. In 2011 Lao and Ireland adopted as a theme for our joint coordinatorship that 'cluster munitions can be cleared and can be cleared quickly'. Our consultations during that period with a wide spectrum of actors in the field, indicated that the selection of appropriate surveying and clearance techniques and equipments was key to achieving the rapid clearance of cluster munition remnants.

In particular the paper highlighted the importance of non-technical and technical survey in effectively isolating contaminated areas, or Confirmed Hazardous Areas, thus reducing greatly the area of land suspected to be hazardous and facilitating rapid clearance.

We are pleased that the present Coordinators on clearance and risk reduction have placed a special emphasis on best practices in non-technical and technical survey.

We also would emphasise the importance of selecting detection equipments of appropriate sensitivity such as large loop detectors to locate cluster munition remnants which normally have a high metal content. It should also be recognised that the overall approach must be tailored to the prevailing circumstances in each affected state, depending on variables such as time since contamination, types of weapons used and environmental factors pertaining.

As CCM States Parties we need to maintain the momentum already created over the past five years and ensure that the CCM continues to be a catalyst for new thinking in the area of clearance. In partnership with the clearance community we must continue to seek ways in which we work smarter with the right technology to achieve better results, and strive to attain as quickly as possible the strategic goal of a world free of cluster munition remnants.

Mr. President,

I would also like to record Ireland's gratitude to the Lao PDR for their leadership in this Convention from hosting the First Meeting of States Parties in Vientiane in 2010 to their role as co-coordinator on clearance on clearance and risk reduction over the last three years. We congratulate the Lao PDR and wish Bosnia Herzegovina well as the undertake the role of coordinator on clearance and risk reduction until 2016.

Thank you.