

## **International cooperation and assistance**

Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Colleagues,

Iraq and Australia, the Coordinators for International Cooperation and Assistance in 2017, have the honor to deliver this report highlighting key developments since the 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of States Parties of the CCM in 2016.

Since the 6MSP, as Coordinators we have worked to facilitate implementation of Actions 5.1 to 5.7 of the Dubrovnik action plan, in which States Parties commit to strengthen partnerships at all levels, communicate challenges and seek assistance, present evidence based needs for better results, take ownership, respond constructively to requests for assistance, make use of existing tools, promote cost efficiency and effectiveness, as well as enhance implementation support.

The annual Article 7 transparency reports are integral to the efforts of the Coordinators to facilitate implementation of the Convention and Dubrovnik action plan. We rely on the information provided in Article 7 reports regarding States Parties' needs and capacities to help States that need assistance form partnerships with States that have the capacity to provide that assistance.

A detailed breakdown of the information provided by States Parties in their 2016 Article 7 transparency reports and official statements is provided in the Geneva Progress Report. In summary, ten (10) States Parties requested international cooperation and assistance for completion of one or more obligations under the Convention: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Colombia, Iraq, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Montenegro, Niger, and Peru. Two (2) requested assistance for storage and stockpile destruction obligations; five (5) for clearance obligations; three (3) for risk reduction education; five (5) for victim assistance obligations; and one (1) for the development of specific national legislation.

Since the Geneva Progress Report was finalized, one additional State (Ireland) has submitted its 2016 annual report. In its report, Ireland informed that it has provided international cooperation and assistance to seven cluster munitions affected States through financial support to implement stockpile destruction, clearance, victim assistance, risk education and advocacy activities.

This brings to sixteen (16) the number of States Parties that have reported that they provided assistance to affected States (Australia, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Liechtenstein, Norway, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland). All sixteen (16) reported that they had provided support for clearance activities; twelve (12) reported support for victim assistance and eleven (11) reported support for risk reduction education and capacity building.

The Coordinators encourage all affected States Parties and States Parties with pressing obligations to provide their Article 7 reports in a timely manner and to enhance the quality

of information provided by reporting in as much detail as possible on their needs and challenges with regard to fulfilment of their obligations, and their capacity to assist others meet their obligations. Both those with needs and those in a position to provide assistance can greatly benefit from clear requests and offers of assistance detailed in Article 7 reports. Article 7 reports are one of the fundamental tools available to keep the CCM community apprised of implementation challenges and needs.

The Coordinators work in 2017 showed what a critical resource Article 7 reports are for bringing States Parties with needs together with potential State Party and civil society partners who may be able to help meet those needs. The Coordinators used the information provided in annual Article 7 reports directly to identify affected States Parties, States Parties with pressing obligations under the Convention and States Parties with capacity to assist others, and invited States from all of these groups to meet directly with each other to discuss needs, capacities and possible partnerships, including through the Country Coalitions initiative of the Presidency. Two such meetings were held, on 8 February in the margins of the 20th International Meeting of National Mine Action Programme Directors and United Nations Advisers (NDM-UN) in Geneva, and on 9 June 2017 in the margins of the Intersessional Meetings of the Anti-Personnel Landmine Convention.

The primary objectives of the meetings were:

- to serve as a new, additional channel through which unmet needs and challenges could be directly raised by affected States Parties and States Parties with pressing obligations, with States Parties with capacity to assist in addressing such needs and overcoming such challenges;
- to help affected States Parties and States Parties with pressing obligations understand how they could access assistance more effectively, by hearing directly from donor states about their priorities and procedures for provision of assistance;
- to help donor states understand what difficulties affected states faced in accessing assistance;
- provide the foundations for the establishment of enhanced partnerships between affected States Parties and States Parties with pressing obligations which would facilitate timely and effective implementation of obligations, including Country Coalitions; and to provide an opportunity for the Coordinators to hear directly from States Parties how to improve their support to States Parties.

Summaries of the discussions at the informal meetings hosted by the Coordinators are available on the CCM website. The key points raised by States in these meetings as issues to be considered in the formation of partnerships to assist affected States Parties/States Parties with pressing obligations included that:

- lack of funding, technical expertise and resources (including technology and equipment) were major obstacles to meeting deadlines for clearance and stockpile destruction, and also to meeting the needs of victims;
- an absence of national ownership and will to prioritise implementation of Convention obligations above other competing national priorities was a key barrier to moving forward on clearance, stockpile destruction and victim assistance;
- provision of funding, expertise and resources were key areas in which donors might assist affected States Parties/States Parties with pressing obligations to meet their obligations, but also important was engaging with and building the capacity of local NGOs and national mine action authorities to deal with Convention obligations;

- a key to success in securing assistance from donors was the provision in a request for assistance (including in Article 7 transparency reports) of as much detailed information as possible about the status of progress in implementing Convention obligations, the nature of the obstacles to implementation and the specific type of assistance necessary to fulfil their obligations;
- preferred channels for requesting assistance varied between donor States Parties, but typically included Article 7 transparency reports, direct bilateral contact through diplomatic or development assistance offices or in the margins of multilateral meetings, or through the donor's preferred civil society partners;
- there was a need for better coordination amongst donors to ensure that assistance was distributed to all states in need, and not concentrated on a limited number of states in a duplicative manner;
- the Coordinators could further enhance informal meetings on cooperation and assistance by holding closed meetings limited to affected States Parties/States Parties with pressing obligations, and separately, closed meetings limited to donor states, to enable more frank exchanges, before holding joint meetings; and
- an individualised approach to assistance, as proposed in the Presidency's Country Coalitions concept, offered significant potential for accelerating progress on implementing deadlines under the Convention, and should be made a focus of the next Action Plan in 2020.

The Coordinators consider the informal meetings proved an effective platform, both because they enabled the valuable exchanges on these points, but also because they led to the establishment of at least one new partnership between a State Party with pressing obligations under Article 3 and an operator with capacity to assist in the fulfilment of those obligations. The Coordinators recommend continuation of the practice of holding such meetings, including meeting separately with affected States Parties and States Parties with pressing obligations and donor States before holding joint meetings, in the next reporting period.

Finally, during the reporting period, Australia represented the Coordinators at both of the Presidency's regional workshops on the Country Coalitions concept, in Bangkok in March and in Zagreb in June. At those meetings we offered some reflections on what might be necessary for effective implementation of the Country Coalition concept, based on the views expressed by States at our informal meetings. These included the following conclusions:

- First, political will is key. No amount of funding or technical expertise channelled to an affected state through a Country Coalition will be effective if the national authorities of the affected state are not willing to prioritise completion of their CCM obligations.
- Second, building capacity for national ownership is vitally important. Country Coalitions must engage with, and aim to channel funding and technical expertise to strengthening, national NGOs and national authorities to enable them to take the lead on managing their clearance, stockpile destruction and victim assistance burdens.
- Third, information and communication will be critical. To successfully engage donors on Country Coalitions, affected states will need to ensure they provide full technical disclosure of their challenges and requirements for completion in Article 7 reports and requests for formation of Country Coalitions to support them. Donor states will need to engage directly with authorities, NGOs and communities on the ground. Ongoing dialogue between all partners in a Coalition is essential.
- Finally, enhanced donor coordination is necessary. In establishing Country Coalitions, donors will need to ensure that their efforts are not duplicating existing programs, and also, that Coalitions are formed for both those well-known states with large-scale cluster

munitions contamination, and lower-profile states with smaller-scale obstacles to completion that may easily be addressed with the support of a Coalition.

As the Coordinators on International Cooperation and Assistance, we stand ready to assist with the engagement, communication and cooperation between affected and donor states, international organisations, operators on the ground and other relevant experts, necessary to operationalise the Country Coalitions initiative.

And we remain ready to facilitate the provision of assistance to States through other mechanisms as they prefer. We encourage affected states parties to provide details plan about their requirements and contact the coordinators in this regard.

### **Questions/challenges for discussion at the Seventh Meeting of States Parties**

We are now pleased to invite States to share their views on international cooperation and assistance, and in doing so, to address the questions set out in the Geneva Progress Report, namely:-

- (a) What are the key obstacles to securing assistance from States Parties and organisations with the capacity to provide it?
- (b) How can States Parties make use of available channels of information within the Convention to make their needs more clearly known, and are there new ways of conveying information which should be explored?
- (c) What is the potential of targeted initiatives such as "country coalitions" to enhance international cooperation and assistance?
- (d) What can the Coordinators do better to enhance international cooperation and assistance among States Parties?

### **Summary of States' interventions**

#### **Closing Remarks**

We would like to express our deepest thanks to the ISU, Sheila, Matthieu and Elaine for the outstanding support they have provided us in our work throughout the year. We also thank those states parties who have worked with us to enhance Cooperation and Assistance among all states parties and stakeholders to ensure the full implementation of CCM provisions.

Finally, as this meeting is also the final presentation of Iraq as a Co- Coordinator on international cooperation and assistance. I would therefore like to thank the ISU as well as Austria as the Co-Coordinator in 2016, and Australia for their outstanding work and excellent cooperation during the last year.

Thank you Mr. President for the floor.