

**SEVENTH MEETING OF STATES PARTIES  
TO THE CONVENTION ON CLUSTER MUNITIONS (CCM)  
SEPTEMBER 4-6, 2017 – GENEVA, SWITZERLAND**

VICTIM ASSISTANCE

Mr. President,

Canada would like to express concern about the rise in the number of victims of cluster munitions in 2016. The Cluster Munitions Coalition reported 971 cluster munition casualties in the last year, the highest annual figure reported since they began collecting these statistics in 2009. This is more than double the number of new casualties recorded in 2015. These lives lost or forever changed are a tragedy and they underscore the urgency of clearance and universalization efforts. They also highlight the importance of continued support to victims.

In victim assistance, as with our other programming, Canada places a priority on inclusion, and it also strongly supports the use of an evidence-based approach. Persons with disabilities, including survivors of cluster munitions remnants, can be among the most vulnerable members of their communities. It is important that they be given opportunities for social and economic reintegration, and to ensure that they have a say in programming designed to support them.

Gender analysis, and use of gender- and age- disaggregated data are essential in maximizing the effectiveness of interventions and ensuring that all members of communities receive adequate care and benefit, along with opportunities to work as agents of change.

In societies with entrenched gender roles, the loss or incapacity of a spouse or male family member can result in stigmatization for the

families of these victims. Women may face discrimination entering the workforce to provide for their families or retaining the titles to their land or custody of their children if their husband is killed.

In addition, loss of mobility can be a particularly challenging as it can be a source of social stigma and psychological trauma for surviving men and boys. Women and girls who survive cluster munitions remnants explosions often face multiple barriers to recovery and integration, meaning that they may require a number of specific economic, social, and rehabilitative services.

Furthermore, since there is often frequent concern about children finding and accidentally detonating cluster munitions, it is important to ensure that risk education reaches both boys and girls through interventions that are sensitive to the access that they may have in their societies.

It is a humanitarian imperative, and our obligation as States Parties, to assist victims of cluster munitions and their crippling remnants. In order for societies to begin the long process of healing following conflicts that employ these devastating weapons, we must ensure that assistance be provided comprehensively and inclusively.

Thank you.