



**Cluster Munition Coalition statement on Clearance and Risk Reduction  
Convention on Cluster Munitions Intersessional Meeting  
19 April 2012  
Delivered by Tamar Gabelnick**

Thank you, Co-chairs, and thanks to the 7 of the 11 States Parties that are confirmed or believed to be affected by cluster munition remnants for having taken the floor this week (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Germany, Lao PDR, Lebanon, Mauritania, and Norway). We believe that this is an important opportunity to apprise other States Parties of the work they have been doing and, where necessary, to identify challenges where they could benefit from support and we encourage every affected State Party to do so. We would therefore have also liked to have heard from Chile and Montenegro, both of which are here this week but did not provide clarification on whether they have obligations under Article 4, which believe they may have. Even a short statement is welcome.

All States Parties that have contaminated areas from military training areas and firing ranges should also follow Norway and Germany's lead and declare their obligation to clear these under the terms of the Convention, as well as providing progress reports as they did this week.

The obligation, as we know, is to clear cluster munition remnants as soon as possible, but not later than 10 years after becoming party to the Convention. Like a number of States Parties, we would put the emphasis on the phrase "as soon as possible". If you start early, your likelihood of finishing early is obviously enhanced. Most of the affected States Parties should be able to fulfill their Article 4 obligations within five years, let alone 10, and at least two states could complete the work this year, with the necessary political and financial support. So we expect to see very few states needing to request deadline extensions, which would be another great achievement for the convention.

Tuesday morning we heard from several experts about the importance of survey in meeting Article 4 obligations in an efficient manner and on how to carry out surveys to get the most accurate estimate of cluster munition contamination. In this regard, we were pleased to hear about progress on survey in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Chad, Croatia, Lao PDR, Lebanon, and Mauritania. It's important that states not just report on past work, but clearly present the results of such work, including the extent of the remaining problem. In this regard, we were confused to hear UXO Lao still saying that 87,000km<sup>2</sup> of land is contaminated, which is no longer seen a credible estimate. We would like to ask for clarification on that point since at the 2MSP Lao PDR gave a figure of 8,470km<sup>2</sup>.

We also would have liked to have heard more about states' future plans for clearance. We hope that by the time of the 3MSP every affected State Party will be in a position to present their plans, and we also encourage states to include such information in their annual transparency reports as well.

Finally, it was very helpful to hear from signatory Chad and non-signatory Cambodia. We encourage them to continue updating us on progress—and of course hope that both will be States Parties soon.

We would like to make a few more remarks on reporting. In order to improve the quality of information provided, we call on States Parties to disaggregate clearly between areas suspected to contain cluster munition remnants and those confirmed to contain cluster munition remnants. We also ask that they include the number of affected areas as well as the estimated size. The Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor along with some operators have been working to develop a minimum annual reporting framework that will be included in the new IMAS on land release later this year. We hope that this will feed into a qualitative improvement in Article 7 reporting.

One final point on reporting, all areas containing cluster munition remnants must be reported on, as, for example Bosnia and Herzegovina did, even where contamination is mixed with mines. We congratulate Croatia for getting its annual report in early, but would ask them to include areas of mixed contamination in future (and as they did in their statement to the intersessionals last year). We would also like to call again on Chile, Guinea-Bissau, and Mozambique to turn in their late initial reports so we can get a better picture of their cluster munition contamination.

Thank you.