



Federal Republic of Germany
Foreign Office

INTERSESSIONAL MEETING OF THE CONVENTION ON CLUSTER MUNITIONS

Geneva, 16 – 19 April 2012

Statement by the Delegation of Germany: Clearance

Mr. Chair,

Let me start by thanking the Lao PDR and Ireland for their excellent work as Coordinators. Your focus on experience gained through clearance operations in the field enables a forward-looking discussion about how best to address the challenges posed by a variety of different situations of contamination with cluster munition remnants.

On previous occasions, Germany informed partners about the suspected contamination of the former military training area of Wittstock, located in the German federal state of Brandenburg, with unexploded ordnance, including cluster munition remnants, dating from the period when it was used by Soviet armed forces. Since the 2MSP in Beirut, the following progress has been made:

In early October 2011, ownership of the area, which had hitherto been under military supervision, was transferred to the governmental authority in charge of real estate (Bundesanstalt für Immobilien-Aufgaben, BImA).

As the new owner, the BImA has developed a risk education programme in collaboration with the local authorities. The programme is already being implemented. The first step of this programme includes the realisation of a danger prevention plan. The main parts of this plan are

- the technical survey and if necessary clearing of a 40 km long and 50 m broad tract of land to ensure fire prevention and environment protection (scheduled completion: 2012, depending on the quantity and quality of detected ordnance),
- the clearing of a network of paths and tracks to enable an emergency management (scheduled completion: 2012, depending on the quantity and quality of detected ordnance).
- The spreading of test fields will start in those parts of the area where the presence of cluster munitions is suspected .

The implementation of these parts of the prevention plan is a crucial prerequisite for the continuation of the technical survey, mainly with regard to the occupational safety of the personnel involved in the clearing.

The utmost is being done in order to obtain timely results from the survey. Germany will keep the States Parties and signatories informed about further developments.

Thank you, Mr Chair.