



Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM)

CCM Intersessionals 16.-19. April 2012

Clearance

Genève, le 19 avril 2012

Madame / Mister Coordinator

My Delegation would like to thank the Lao PDR and Ireland for their preparations on clearance and risk reduction. We would also like to thank UXO Lao, the GICHD, UNDP, UNMAS, NPA and ITF for their very illuminating and substantive presentations.

Comprehensive activities with regard to clearance and risk reduction are pivotal to achieve our goal, a world free of cluster munitions and their remnants, enhancing the protection of the civilian population and of international personnel engaged in peacekeeping, humanitarian and development cooperation activities. In simple terms, clearance operations and risk education are the decisive measures in order to get rid of a major source of the harm caused by cluster munitions.

Our delegation therefore values the continued exchange on the relevant lessons learned as indicated by Action #15 of the Vientiane Action Plan. In this spirit, my delegation would like to share a few thoughts that might be relevant to our common goal of a timely fulfilment of the obligations under Article 4. The thoughts are based on the experience of various EOD-experts and demining specialists, inter alia those experts sent by Switzerland to various

countries since 1999, but also based on the very substantive discussions in the context of the 15th International Meeting of National Mine Action Programme Directors and UN Advisors held here in Geneva just a few weeks ago.

In line with the various presentations held on Tuesday we would like to emphasize the importance of **surveys** used to assess the contamination and impact of areas with mines and ERW: the results of initial surveys mostly decide over the allocation of resources for clearance programmes. Biases in the surveys may therefore lead to an under or over-estimation of the problem and thus to a wrong allocation of resources. As experts and specialists also indicated, the following measures may reduce this risk:

- Teams designing and conducting surveys may be mixed among local specialists, men and women, international specialists, representatives from the affected state, as well as representatives from international organisations, NGO's or donor states. Such a mix can support the development of a holistic and unbiased view.
- The training of survey teams should be based on uniform standards, or the same teams conduct their surveys in various and different (or ideally in all) potentially contaminated areas. This measure enhances the comparability and coherence of the data collected. Likewise, a uniform definition of criteria for the survey guarantees a certain comparability of the data collected.
- Quality assurance through a “cross-check” or similar measures by another survey team may improve the reliability of the data gathered.
- Finally, a good survey with comparable and reliable data also provides a solid fundament for a reliable information management (i.e. with databases). These measures may thus contribute to the establishment of accurate national plans.

Switzerland has identified **gender mainstreaming** as one of the guiding principles in its mine action and is implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1325 by way of a national action plan. Therefore, we stress the particular importance of sex and gender disaggregated data collection in surveys and of gender sensitive approaches to surveys and clearance.

Another important factor refers to the **financial predictability** for clearance programmes: long-term commitments over a time period of for example 3 to 5 years enable a better planning of resources and avoid volatile shifts in funding. However, we are aware that this demands commitments that have to withstand also changes of priorities within donor states.

And finally, a **programme management “up to the last mile”** seems essential to us, too. A joint planning of programmes by local authorities and international actors including the definition of concrete milestones, criteria to be fulfilled, the phasing-out of the experts' work and the final hand-over have proven to be a successful approach. Such an approach also allows a predictable and well-planned shift of capacities from international experts to local experts and authorities.

(In this context, of course, the relevance of accurate and detailed reporting on both achievements and remaining challenges cannot be overestimated. We have highlighted this in the respective session on Wednesday.)

Madame / Mister Coordinator

The political will of States Parties to establish and conduct effective and efficient clearance operations and risk education programmes certainly remains a decisive factor. In addition to that, however, a continued exchange on the experience in the field by governmental, UN and non-governmental mine action operators seems to us indispensable.

Thank you.