

## Opening remarks by Ambassador Stefano Toscano, GICHD Director Intersessional Meeting of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, CICG, 16 May 2022

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, dear Colleagues,

It is a great honor and pleasure for me to deliver opening remarks today and to meet again so many delegations here in Geneva. This meeting is very important to the work of the Convention and its implementation: it marks the halfway point between the Convention's formal meeting and represents therefore an excellent opportunity to take stock of what has been achieved and what remains to be done towards a successful 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties. I would like to thank wholeheartedly Ambassador Liddle and his team, as well as the ISU, for their efforts to organize it. The GICHD is proud to have been able to support you in this.

Last year, States Parties adopted an ambitious, realistic and measurable Lausanne Action Plan that will have a lasting impact on affected States and communities once realized. The LAP provides a solid roadmap to guide our work over the next five years. Strong national ownership, sound strategic planning, the application of the latest standards, methods and tools as well as international solidarity will continue to play a pivotal role in this regard. We all bear the responsibility to make this action plan a reality on the ground, for the benefit of all.

Let us work together to support States Parties with outstanding obligations under the Convention to make the most of the action plan. Its ultimate goal, which should never be forgotten, is to support efforts towards fulfilling all of the Convention's obligations, and to provide a framework to assess related progress and take corrective action if and as necessary. For this system to function fully, it is essential that States Parties include information on LAP actions implementation in their art. 7 reports. Similarly, art. 3 and art. 4 extension requests should incorporate relevant LAP actions.

Dear colleagues,

Our work is not just about clearing land. The mine action community makes a crucial contribution to humanitarian, development and peace efforts that should be highlighted and consistently pursued. In this context, jointly with UNDP, the GICHD continues to provide partner countries with advice and support for better linking mine action contributions with sustainable development frameworks. We also continue generating evidence-based comprehensive analyses of the impact of mine action on sustainable development in the medium and long term. In this framework, we have recently published four case studies that assess the impact of mine action on sustainable development in Cambodia and Colombia and the extent to which mine action efforts have been incorporated into national development planning in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Lao PDR. We look forward to continuing this work in the future, contributing to connect the work under this Convention with broader humanitarian, development and peace efforts. We are convinced that it is a must for the sector to continue to ensure and demonstrate its relevance to broader agenda.

We all know that we are living in a complex period where, unfortunately, armed conflicts endure in many parts of the world, including a few hundred kilometers from Geneva. This results in increased risks from explosive devices and endangers the lives of many fellow human beings. In this context,

upholding and implementing the norms established by the Convention on Cluster Munitions continue to be of paramount significance.

The GICHD commends the inclusion of a dedicated section on risk education in the Lausanne Action Plan. By doing so, States Parties have reaffirmed their deep commitment towards protecting civilians from the risks of cluster munitions through the delivery of timely, context-specific and targeted risk education interventions. Recent events have once more highlighted the vital importance of delivering emergency risk education to communities at risk. Allow me here to highlight a recent Q&A on emergency EORE developed by the EORE Advisory Group for Ukraine which can also be adapted to other contexts.

Dear colleagues

The next five years will be key to our work, and we are fortunate to have before us a clear action plan to support our efforts. These next two days of meetings and side events – after all the challenges we have been through in the last two years – are a strong testimony to the strength of our sector and its determination to move forward.

I wish you all fruitful discussions. Thank you.