



CCM INTERCESSIONAL MEETING – 15-16 MAY 2022

DIRECTOR SPEECH

Mr. President,

Please allow me to congratulate you and the United Kingdom on taking the Presidency of the Tenth Meeting of States Parties of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. I would like thank you for following up with the extension plans, and for this opportunity for us to update you and share our challenges with you.

Excellencies,

Lebanon signed the convention on cluster munitions in 2010, which entered into force in 2011. In the first 10 years, we weren't able to complete the clearance of all known contamination according to article 4 for many reasons.

Nevertheless, in 2020, having acquired an excellent expertise throughout the years, and with the participation of all stakeholders, including donors, the Lebanon Mine Action Program developed a new realistic strategy, that respond to the needs, and grounded in facts and statistics. Moreover, and based on a steady statistics of the last 3 years, the extension plan was developed and submitted in 2019. In 2021, the plan was approved during the Second Review Conference of the CCM.

As demonstrated in the previous presentation, the Lebanon Mine Action Center in cooperation with all Implementing Agencies, is continually working to improve its productivity to achieve the Extension plan objective.

Since 2006, the date when most of this contamination happened, the international support for Lebanon has been really outstanding. We are proud of all our friends and grateful for continuously standing by the Lebanese people overcoming these challenges.

On the other hand, the Mine Action Forum in Lebanon, which is another version of the Country Coalition concept, has been a key to transforming our national program to a more professionally successful level. Led by Norway, the forum was launched in 2017 as a meeting of all stakeholders in closed doors, to discuss all issues related to mine action in Lebanon. The meeting is designed to present achievements compared to previously set action points, discuss challenges and needs, and then



propose future steps for the next 6 months. In 2021, the Netherlands has taken the lead for the forum.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

For long years Lebanon continues to suffer the consequences of high contamination with cluster munitions. The toll of casualties every year is a live witness of how imminent this hazard continues to be. In 2021, a remarkable increase is a shocking fact.

This is a pressing humanitarian concern, under the present economic crisis Lebanon is facing, mostly due to residents being out of economic desperation resorting to unsafe practices on hazardous areas, whether collecting wood for fire or scrap metal to sell them. On the other hand, the return to rural areas and agricultural production has never been more important. The small size of Lebanon increases the need for every square meter of land.

LMAC believes that the strong managerial expertise that we have developed, along with a solid strategy and plan, and the partnership with renowned international NGOs to implement this plan, can definitely achieve the final goal. Nevertheless, the third pillar of this partnership, the international support, remains essential in completing the tripod.

Mr. President,

The last 11% of contamination should receive the same level of support as of the first year especially that they contain in part some difficult terrain.

Finally, LMAC wouldn't have been able to sustain the momentum throughout the years and multiple challenges without the strong commitment of its partners. We hereby would like to acknowledge the persistent support of our donors namely the UN, France, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, and the United States.

Thank you.