

MAG Statement on International Cooperation and Assistance

Check against delivery

Thank you, Mr. President.

Allow me to start by congratulating you on taking this role. We commend the efforts made by the UK in the implementation of the Convention, through both diplomatic engagement and the Global Mine Action Programme.

While significant clearance of cluster munitions is being undertaken across the world, global progress is being undermined by new use of cluster munitions, with devastating humanitarian consequences, as we are seeing in Ukraine. Such reckless actions have severe consequences, especially when used in populated areas, and impact the wellbeing and socio-economic stability of communities for many years to come. MAG condemns any use of cluster munitions by any actor at any time, and we welcome the strong condemnation expressed by the Presidency and by many of you in this room.

New use of cluster munitions adds to an already significant global contamination problem, meaning increased and sustained support is more important than ever. With the scale of needs far exceeding the resources available, we call on donor states to increase their support for cluster munitions clearance programmes, including to states parties with Article 4 obligations, such as Bosnia and Herzegovina and Chad, who are submitting their extension requests this year.

MAG also welcomes the initiative by the UK to explore innovative finance mechanisms during its Presidency and was pleased to participate in meetings in Cambodia and Wilton Park to discuss these. As a humanitarian organisation, MAG firmly believes that any new approaches should consider the potential for unintended consequences, and community interests should take precedence over economic profits. When considering the application of different funding models in any given context, a conflict sensitivity lens should be applied, drawing on gender- and diversity-sensitive community engagement.

Mr. President,

Whether we rely on traditional or innovative funding mechanisms, national ownership and capacity development of national authorities must remain core goals to ensure effective and sustainable international cooperation and assistance. Adequate national capacity is essential to oversee and coordinate any scale up of operations enabled by large scale innovative financing, but also to manage remaining contamination by cluster munitions or other explosive ordnance. As a sector, we need to work together to provide more, and more effective, capacity development. If this is less suited to new funding models, a solution might be for donors to increase support for capacity development through traditional funding models, while the higher clearance costs are supported through innovative finance.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to commend your efforts towards universalisation of the Convention. Achieving change requires long-term commitment and we hope you will sustain these efforts long after your presidency. The international community must stand firm against the erosion

of humanitarian norms and remain steadfast in its universalisation efforts. MAG is available to support through our technical experts and global network of programmes.

Thank you, Mr. President.

ENDS.