



Convention on Cluster Munitions Intersessional Meeting

May 2022

Statement by The HALO Trust International Cooperation and Assistance – Innovative Finance

Check Against Delivery

Thank you Ambassador,

As this is the only time that The HALO Trust intends to take the floor, I hope you will allow me to make a short reference to the war in Ukraine.

HALO has worked in Ukraine since 2016. Prior to the current conflict, the backbone of the programme was a team of 430 of my Ukrainian colleagues. In true HALO style, they responded immediately when war broke out. They distributed risk education messages and emergency supplies to bomb shelters. And they worked with the HALO communications team to develop a digital risk education campaign that has reached millions of Ukrainian across the country.

Those messages have sadly proved essential given the scale of bombardments that we are all following in the news. HALO has refocused its entire programme to respond to the current conflict to protect civilians, support the emergency services and enable the humanitarian community to conduct its work safely. My Ukrainian colleagues remain the backbone of HALO's work in Ukraine.

HALO is committed to the people of Ukraine and it is our firm intent to stay the course. This is only possible due to the generous support of our donors, both public and private. Their flexibility and generosity has enabled HALO to refocus and scale up our programme. That includes many of the governments in the room, including the Presidency. We are deeply grateful for your support and the agility with which you have stepped up to support HALO and our brave Ukrainian colleagues, with whom we stand in solidarity.

Distinguished delegates,

Turning to the focus of this session, we welcome the role the UK has played in driving forward innovative finance within the mine action community. As many of you will know, exploring all forms of innovative finance has been a top policy priority for HALO, and it is an explicit part of our organisational strategy. We were pleased to be part of the study, in partnership with Social Finance and the FCDO.

The need for new modes of funding is plain to see. Despite the generosity of many states and organisations, our sector remains woefully under-funded. Funding has been broadly static for a decade. Which means it is declining against inflation. Meanwhile the last decade has seen a huge need for our sector's work in

response to conflict in Iraq, Syria, Libya, Afghanistan and, of course Ukraine. The current way of working is not sustainable – we cannot expect to do so much more with less.

The study has shown that there is potential for many and varied forms of finance highlighted by the UK-funded study, depending of course on context. It is vital that discussion goes beyond impact bonds and consider front-loading mechanisms and forms of blended finance. It is also important that work on innovative finance goes beyond discussion.

In closing, I would also like to remind delegates that this is not just about leveraging more funding for the sector. It is also about driving greater integration of our work with wider economic development. It is about enabling and supporting greater national ownership. And it is most of all about achieving greater impact for people affected by conflict.

Thank you.

ENDS