

Convention on Cluster Munitions

Intersessional Meetings

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE

Statement by Australia

29 June 2011

Statement delivered by Ms Christine Pahlman, Mine Action Coordinator, Australian Agency for International Development

Australia is committed to efforts to enhance the availability of and effectiveness of cooperation and assistance in relation to cluster munitions.

As noted earlier in this meeting, we think it is important to emphasise that Australia takes a comprehensive approach to our mine action cooperation and assistance and does not differentiate between action on mines, explosive remnants of war and cluster munitions in situations where one or more of these weapons are relevant.

As such it is difficult, in many circumstances, to distinguish between the provision and utilisation of our funding for work in relation to cluster munitions, landmines and other explosive remnants of war.

Since pledging \$100 million to mine action in November 2009, Australia has so far provided \$66.26 million for mine action initiatives. This funding is inclusive of our support to cluster munitions.

At current projections we will exceed our commitment of \$100 million to mine action within the life of our strategy.

In other interventions, I have mentioned some of our funding initiatives since the first meeting of state parties which is intended to support the Vientiane Action Plan.

In addition to that already mentioned, since 1 MSP we have committed the following funding that will directly or indirectly progress the work of the Convention.

- \$400,000 to assist Lebanon to host the second meeting of state parties of the Convention on Cluster Munitions in September and the UNDP in its role as Executive Coordinator to the President.

- A contribution of \$1.35 million to the ICBL/CMC over three years will promote and monitor universal adherence to the Convention on Cluster Munitions as well as the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention.
- A contribution of \$4 million through the UN Voluntary Trust Fund to support mine action in Libya, southern Sudan, the DRC and Guinea Bissau.

Mr Chair, we also wish to advise that Australia is reviewing how our mine action contributions over the next few years can be more effectively applied to assist states to meet their cluster munition clearance obligations.

We would welcome any observations on our assistance and opportunities to discuss and ensure that our assistance is effective, efficient and well coordinated.

Our individual efforts will be more effective if we work in a strong and closely coordinated partnership with affected states, other donors and implementing agencies.

Australia welcomes any opportunities to explore and discuss how our individual assistance efforts can be collectively applied and coordinated to strategically progressively, and effectively assist states in meeting their Convention obligations including to achieve the important goal of becoming free of cluster munitions.

Finally Mr Chair, Australia encourages affected states to continue their efforts to confirm the extent of their cluster munition contamination and clearly identify their assistance needs to the international community.

I would like to emphasise that as a donor we look to our affected state partners:

- to provide accurate information on their cluster munition challenges and resource requirements,
- to demonstrate ownership and the national priority accorded to cluster munition action including through ratifying the convention and providing national contributions,
- and, to provide effective national leadership and coordination of cluster munition action.

This information is vital for donors such as ourselves to be able to respond with funding and technical assistance.

We thank state parties and signatories for the efforts already made in this regard.

We look forward to working with state parties, UN agencies, implementing partners and other donors to assist states in meeting their obligations under the Convention.