



## United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action

### Eighth Meeting of States Parties to the **Convention on Cluster Munitions**

(3 – 5 September 2018)

#### International Cooperation and Assistance

Geneva, 3 September 2018

Mr. President,<sup>1</sup>

The following statement is delivered on behalf of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA), comprising twelve United Nations entities<sup>2</sup> involved in mine action.

At the outset, the United Nations would like to assure you Excellency of the United Nations full support during your Presidency.

The Convention on Cluster Munitions continues to make progress towards universalization, and the United Nations joins the assembly in congratulating Namibia and Sri Lanka as 103<sup>rd</sup> and 104<sup>th</sup> State Party. Yet, efforts should be strengthened to reach the goal of 130 States Parties by 2020.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations was entrusted to serve as the depository of the Convention, and the United Nations urges the 16 signatories<sup>3</sup> to take the necessary steps to ratify the Convention. The United Nations also calls on States who have not joined the Convention to also consider becoming States parties.

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<sup>1</sup> Deputy Permanent Representative of Nicaragua, Mr. Carlos Ernesto Morales Davila.

<sup>2</sup> The 12 departments and offices of the Secretariat, specialized agencies, funds and programmes are: the United Nations Mine Action Service of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Health Organization (WHO). The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and the World Bank are observers.

<sup>3</sup> Angola, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Cyprus, Djibouti, Gambia, Haiti, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, Liberia, Namibia, Nigeria, Philippines, São Tomé and Príncipe, Tanzania and Uganda.



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Excellencies, dear colleagues,

**Ten years** have passed since the adoption of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. This breakthrough Convention aimed to put an end to the civilian suffering caused by the use of cluster munitions. States Parties have achieved a great deal in advancing the protection of civilians against the practice of these insidious weapons, and against the impact of remnants long after conflicts have ended. **The Dubrovnik Action Plan** is critical as it lays out clear goals for States Parties up to the Second Review Conference, hence paving the way to achieving the common target of 2030. Implementation of the Convention also contributes to stability, security and sustainable development.

Since the Convention entered into force, 16 State Parties have completed **stockpile destruction** ahead of their deadlines. The United Nations would like to commend Cuba on its achievement of completing destruction five years ahead of its deadline. This year, Croatia and Spain have also met their obligations under Article 3 by the deadline, and the United Nations congratulates them on this achievement.

The United Nations wants to remind all relevant States Parties of the 2020 deadline on **clearance obligations** under Article 4. It is critical that States Parties, with the support of the international community, keep progressing towards completion. The United Nations commends the ongoing efforts of the coordinators of the “Country coalition approach”, started under the German Presidency, and hopes that it will continue to ensure the much-needed support to affected States Parties. We would like to ensure you of the continued support and assistance of the United Nations to affected States to comply with their international legal obligations. The United Nations also welcomes the timely work led by Bosnia and Herzegovina on the draft guidelines for Article 3 and 4 Extension Requests, and looks forward to fruitful discussions.



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In addition to clearance requirements, Article 4 provides that States Parties shall take further measures to prevent harm to civilians. **Risk education** plays an important role in that regard.

In South Lebanon, to reduce the likelihood of accidents from cluster munition remnants of previous conflicts, UNICEF and UNMAS coordinate with the Lebanon Mine Action Centre on the implementation of risk education activities. Presentations and games at school or through youth associations, informing and educating children on the threats of explosive remnants, are helping children adopt safe behaviour when encountering remnants of cluster munitions.

Ten years ago, the adoption of the Convention on Cluster Munitions advanced our understanding of what assisting survivors means and should be. Ten years later, the majority of States Parties with obligations under **Article 5 Victim Assistance** have designated a national focal point, adopted a national action plan relating to survivors and/or persons with disabilities, and included survivors in decision-making processes. Unfortunately, efforts to help those who have survived remain grossly under-resourced. According to information available from the Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor<sup>4</sup>, only 4% of international support for mine action currently goes to victim assistance. The United Nations applauds the governments who support survivors, and encourages others to join these efforts at a time when 99% of cluster munitions casualties reported are civilians.<sup>5</sup>

The United Nations would like to stress again the importance of initial and annual reporting, an obligation under Article 7 of the Convention. Not only is compliance on “reporting” a legal obligation, it is an essential tool for States Parties to monitor and evaluate their progress and take stock of their own national situation. In addition, it is an important

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<sup>4</sup> 2016 Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor.

<sup>5</sup> 2017 Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor recorded 289 people injured or killed. 99% of recorded casualties were civilians.



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transparency measure, as they enhance trust between States, provide essential information for requesting assistance and programming appropriate support.

Excellencies,

In its latest resolution on Implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, the General Assembly reiterated its strong concern<sup>6</sup> at the number of allegations and reports on the use of cluster munitions that continue in different parts of the world with devastating harm on civilians. The Security Council in the resolution 2365 on mine action called *on all parties to armed conflicts to end immediately and definitively any indiscriminate use of explosive devices in violation of international humanitarian law*.<sup>7</sup>

The United Nations echoes their concerns and continues to stress the legal and moral obligations of all parties to conflicts to comply strictly with IHL; the United Nations also considers the protection of civilians as a priority in all its endeavours and will feature the protection of civilians from cluster munitions and other explosive hazards in its forthcoming strategy 2019-2023.

Thank you.

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<sup>6</sup> A/RES/72/54

<sup>7</sup> S/RES/2365