



IRELAND

International Cooperation and Assistance

Statement by

Colonel Jim Burke

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at the

9th Meeting of States Parties to the
Convention on Cluster Munitions
4th September 2019

President,

As the outset, let me congratulate you on your election as the President of the 9th Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) and offer you the full support of my delegation. I would also like to congratulate the work of the co-ordinators, the Netherlands and Peru for their hard work on International Cooperation and Assistance. The activities identified in the ICA concept note offer a useful roadmap to achieving our collective aims.

I would like to align Ireland with the Statement delivered by the European Union, and add the following remarks in a national capacity.

President

Ireland's cooperation and assistance programmes for humanitarian demining are directly linked to Ireland's commitments under the Convention on Cluster Munitions, the APLC, as well as the CCW. Ireland continues to acknowledge the importance and benefit of identifying synergies in the implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions and other humanitarian disarmament instruments. Promoting efforts that enhance better coordination on victim assistance and international cooperation with other disarmament conventions, can contribute to the overall strengthening of disarmament instruments, and can ease implementation at the national level. As Co-Coordinator for Victim Assistance on the CCM Coordination Committee for the period 2018-2019, Ireland continued to promote these synergies, where possible.

President,

Ireland has long maintained a commitment of support to humanitarian mine action programmes, including those concerned with weapons and ammunition disposal. Ireland's support for humanitarian mine action and in clearing contaminated land and roads has contributed to long-term economic and sustainable development and has assisted with a reduction in civilian risk from ERWs.

Over the last decade Ireland has contributed over €30 million to humanitarian demining programmes and is proud to have contributed €2 million in 2019 for programmes across Afghanistan, Colombia, Somalia, South Sudan and Zimbabwe. Additionally, Ireland continues its support for humanitarian demining and clearance of unexploded ordnance in Lao PDR, Cambodia, Myanmar and Vietnam. In line with the Article 5 of the Convention, Ireland endeavours to ensure that all programme funding administered for humanitarian demining is

utilised in a manner which gives due recognition to the need for Gender and Diversity-Responsive Victim Assistance.

President,

It is now over ten years since the international community met in Dublin to adopt the Convention on Cluster Munitions. The CCM constitutes an important step in the domain of disarmament and for our collective efforts to ensure the protection of civilians. Ireland is proud to have played a leadership role in the negotiation of this important Convention.

Since its entry into force, a 106 State Parties have ratified or acceded to the Convention and there are now 14 signatory States. We welcome the latest ratifications by Namibia, Gambia and Philippines and we must continue to step up our collective efforts to reach the target of 130 States Parties by the 2020 Review Conference.

We are also pleased to note the findings from the recently launched *2019 Cluster Munition Monitor* which indicates that States Parties to the Convention have already destroyed 99% of their stockpiled cluster munitions, eliminating a collective total of more than 1.5 million cluster munitions and 178 million sub-munitions.

By any measure this is an impressive record and one we can all be proud of. Ireland would also like to acknowledge the work of UN entities, the ICRC, mine action operators and civil society, who continue to play a constructively role in helping to realise our collective aims.

President,

While these achievements establish the CCM as one of the most successful disarmament treaties today, this success should not be a cause for complacency. Cluster munitions continue to pose a significant threat in certain parts of the world and we are deeply concerned with reports of new victims again this year. We must remain active in our efforts to bring additional states within the Convention, and in particular those states either affected by cluster munitions or which retain them.

President,

To conclude, while we recognise the many challenges that remain to be addressed, Ireland remains encouraged by the achievements of the Convention. In looking to the future, Ireland will continue efforts to support victims, promote the universalisation and effective

implementation of the Convention and maintain a focus on our collective goal to ensure the total elimination of these weapons.

Thank You.