



PHILIPPINES

INTERVENTION

First Part of the Second Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions

25-27 November 2020

Agenda Item 8(b): Clearance risk education

Mr. President,

The Philippines understands that fulfilling our obligations under Article 4 could be challenging. Clearing cluster munitions contamination requires enormous amount of time, energy, expertise, and other resources. Much work still needs to be done to complete our work of achieving a world free of cluster munitions remnants.

Still, we can be proud to look back and note that for the past 10 years of this Convention, affected states, with the support of stakeholders, have managed to clear 766 square kilometers of cluster munitions-contamination. We congratulate in particular the countries that have completed their clearance obligations.

Similarly, we have also made great strides in the area of risk education.

In this regard, the Philippines commends the work of the Presidencies and Coordinators and the Analysis Groups through the years. The Philippines also commends the stable guidance of the ISU and the support of all stakeholders.

Mr. President,

These achievements are demonstrative of the robust international cooperation that this Convention facilitates.

In particular, the Philippines is impressed with the achievements made by our fellow ASEAN Member State, and also one of the most heavily contaminated countries, the Lao PDR.

We are pleased to hear from the Ambassador earlier that Lao PDR has been able to clear 25,250 hectares in contaminated territory for the past five years. It has also been a model for risk education in our region.

The Philippines commends Lao PDR for its efforts to build its national capacities in the area of mine action. Its adoption of National Standard on Mine Action, including mine education, and its concrete plans to fulfill its Article 4 commitments within the clearance extension it sought last year are examples of its full commitment to the implementation of the Convention.

While the rest of the world committed to an ambitious global plan of achieving 17 Sustainable Development Goals, Lao PDR took it a step further by identifying Lives Free from UXO as its 18th SDG. The Philippines likewise commends Lao PDR for linking mine action with development.

The Philippines also commends the Swiss Presidency for upholding this link and for according appropriate attention to clearance and risk education in drafting the Lausanne Action Plan. Likewise, the Philippines supports context-specific and gender and diversity-sensitive pursuit of mine action.

Mr. President,

In all our engagements on humanitarian disarmament, the Philippines has always emphasized the need for national ownership of mine action.

It is our firm belief that international cooperation and assistance must therefore be pursued in a manner that incrementally reduces the affected states' reliance on foreign technical expertise, and therefore build independent and sustainable national capacities.

I thank you, Mr. President.