



Cluster Munitions Convention Second Review Conference (Part 1)

November 2020

Statement on International Cooperation & Assistance

Check Against Delivery

Thank you Mr President.

International Cooperation and Assistance has been a cornerstone of this Convention since its entry into force. Donors to HALO and the mine action sector have played a key role in that, for which we are grateful. We are especially grateful for the flexibility that the sector's donors have shown during this exceptionally challenging year.

We welcome the inclusion of strong actions in the Lausanne Action Plan that have built on the solid foundation set at the First Review Conference in Dubrovnik. We also welcome the way the plan has drawn on the Oslo Action Plan.

We acknowledge that the Oslo and Lausanne Action Plans are developed and agreed under separate Conventions. But we reiterate the point we made at the Second PrepCom – the implementation of national mine action programmes takes place under single national frameworks. That is why we continue to stress the importance of synergy and complementarity between plans agreed here, and those agreed last year in Oslo.

Mr President,

The country coalition concept, established by States Parties of this Convention, has yielded results. It shows what can be achieved when individuals and organisations pull together at the national level. It shows the benefit of challenging ourselves, each other and our way of working. We encourage all States to make use of this approach – under whatever name it may have – and also embrace and apply the recommendations provided by the Mine Action Review.

Let's make the next five years count. Actions are only ever as strong as the commitment to deliver on them.

As we said last week, HALO is firmly of the view that the mine action sector's success will also depend on us increasing our outreach to broader sectors and agendas. We do not – and cannot – operate in isolation from other global challenges. From environmental resilience and adaptation, to response to complex contemporary conflict, we must increase our outreach. We must diversify our partners. And we must articulate the value of our work in multiple and accessible ways.

Mr President,

Despite challenges of COVID, there is every reason to be optimistic about the successes that this Convention can achieve over the next five years. But HALO remains convinced that the pace of progress will be increased

by proactively exploring and embracing alternative funding to complement traditional donor sources. Our community must be open to new, innovative solutions to the challenge of sustainable funding, to benefit those with the most to lose.

We therefore welcome last week's announcement by the United Kingdom that it will undertake a study into alternative finance. We look forward to working with affected states and other interested NGOs in developing this area of our work.

We have been talking about this for a while. Now it's time to turn words into action. And get this off the ground.

Distinguished delegates,

Financial assistance is vital. But International Cooperation & Assistance is about more than that. It is about how we work and who we work with. It is about testing ourselves, challenging norms, finding ways to improve and change the system. And, forging new partnerships.

With that in mind, we congratulate Mines Action Canada and leading Welsh mental health charity Platform on bringing together their networks of young people from six continents to discuss mental health, wellbeing and trauma in the margins of this meeting.

This is a fantastic example of what can be achieved when we look beyond our sector, combine our ideas and listen. It also shows how we can use virtual forums and meetings to be more inclusive, and have global conversations with our future leaders on policy and practice.

In closing,

People have always been at the heart of our work. Identifying who they are, how they benefit, and ensuring full, meaningful and inclusive participation in mine action are essential components of our work. We therefore welcome this week's launch of the *Second Edition of the Guide to Standardising Beneficiary Definitions in Humanitarian Mine Action*.

This initiative is the product of cooperation between colleagues from DanChurchAid, Danish Demining Group, Humanity & Inclusion, Mines Advisory Group, Norwegian People's Aid, and the Swiss Foundation for Mine Action, as well as my own organisation. It also benefited from input from colleagues at the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the United Nations Mine Action Service.

This is an example of collaboration at its best. Collaboration on which the next five years of work will depend.

Our sector works best when it is inclusive and transparent. Most of all, it works best when it works together.

Thank you.

ENDS