



United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action

Second Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions

Statement under agenda item 8 c) Clearance and risk reduction education

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Delivered by Mr. Bruno Donat, Chief, Geneva office, UNMAS

Mr. President,¹

On behalf of UNMAS and on behalf of all members of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA),² I commend you for your hard work in making the Second Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions a success under these difficult circumstances.

Excellencies,

The United Nations congratulates Croatia and Montenegro for completing their obligation under Article 4 to clear and destroy all cluster munition remnants located in contaminated areas under their jurisdiction or control in 2020. After Mozambique, they are the second and third State to achieve this goal since the first Review Conference in Dubrovnik in 2015. Ten States Parties still have outstanding clearance obligations under Article 4 and we encourage them to increase their efforts to complete clearance.

¹ Ambassador Felix Baumann, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the Conference on Disarmament and President of the Second Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

² The United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action consists of twelve United Nations Departments and Offices of the Secretariat, specialized agencies, funds and programmes: the United Nations Mine Action Service of the Department of Peace Operations, the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations 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.



The United Nations is pleased that the draft Lausanne Action Plan to be adopted in February 2021 includes measurable actions to guide States Parties in the implementation of their clearance obligation as well as specific indicators allowing for an assessment of progress in the years to come. In particular, the United Nations calls on affected States to take into account the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) in the design and updates of their national standards and “to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of surveys and clearance, taking into account IMAS-compliant land release processes”, as set out in the draft Lausanne Action Plan. IMAS are the result of an inclusive technical consultative process led by the United Nations and are regularly updated to integrate latest best practices and technological developments in mine action. The role of IMAS is also recognized in Article 4 (3) of the Convention.

The United Nations particularly welcomes the inclusion of a dedicated section on risk education in the draft Lausanne Action Plan, which is in line with the critical role risk education plays in protecting civilians from death or injuries caused by cluster munitions remnants, particularly in contexts in which clearance is not yet feasible. In 2019, the UN funded explosive ordnance risk education programmes that reached more than 3 million people through in-person risk education. Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, the United Nations has worked with affected States and civil society partners to accelerate the use of digital technologies and radio platforms for risk education activities in innovative ways.

Effective clearance and risk education must reflect gender, age and diversity considerations. In this regard, the United Nations supports that this principle be mainstreamed and spelled out in more concrete terms in all relevant sections of the Lausanne Action Plan, including in the sections on survey and clearance and risk education. Under Action 23 of the draft Action Plan, States Parties ensure that their programmes consider gender and diversity in all appropriate activities related to survey and clearance. Equally important, States Parties commit to implementing context-specific, tailor-made risk education activities and interventions which prioritize populations most at risk and are



sensitive to gender, age, disability and other diversity factors of people in affected communities.

Excellencies,

Clearance is the only means to definitively eliminate the threat posed by cluster munitions remnants to communities living in contaminated areas. Clearance and risk education are essential to ensure the safe return of persons displaced by conflict and accelerate the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies, in pursuit of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The United Nations will continue to support affected States Parties in their efforts to implement their obligations on clearance and risk education and their commitments under the Lausanne Action Plan.

Thank you.