

Statement by Lao Delegation on Victim Assistance

At the 10th Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster
Munitions

31st August to 2 September 2022, Geneva

Mr. President,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of Lao delegation, I would like to express our thanks to Mexico and Chile on their hard work as a Victim Assistance Continuator, and I would like to deliver a few remarks on my national statement on the issue of victim assistance, especially victim assistance with respect to unexploded ordnance in Lao PDR. Lao PDR is one of the most ERW contaminated countries in the world and supporting victims of the remnants of war remains a priority for the Government. Lao PDR is strongly committed to the implementation of Article 5 of the CCM and the CRPD (Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities) as well as the UNESCAP declaration on decade of disabled people and other related instruments. In addition, the overall scope of the countries' Victim Assistance strategy is outlined in Lao PDR's national and unique SDG 18, "Lives Safe from UXO", which it strives to achieve by 2030.

This year, 2022, the Government of Lao PDR endorsed the National Strategic Plan on UXO/Mine Action "Safe Path Forward III" covering the years 2021 to 2030. The National Strategic Plan has set five ambitious outcomes, one of which aims to target livelihood development support for 11,400 victims. To

implement this target, the government utilizes the War Victim Medical Fund as a mechanism to provide funding support to victims. Established in 2016, the fund is now undergoing a revision to better provide services to casualties. The government is also focusing on strengthening policies aiming to provide physical treatment, rehabilitation, related costs incurred by casualties for survivors, compensation contributions to families and vocational training and socio-economic support in the three most impacted provinces. The Government hopes to extend this comprehensive approach to all victims in all provinces. In consultation with all operators, stakeholders and development partners, the government of Lao PDR are in the process of developing a new 5 Year Victim Assistance Framework. In 2021, we provided vocational training, medical support, rehabilitation, employment and economic support 46 people.

In 2022-203 we will strengthen coordination and cooperation with stakeholder to provide support to victim and their families. We will provide vocational training, employment an economic support about 400 people in two provinces such as Xiengkhouang and Huaphane provinces.

If we compare to the needs of victim assistance, we still continue facing significant challenges, such as vocational training, employment, physical and psycho-social rehabilitation. To overcome the issues, Lao PDR will find ways and means to effectively mobilize and utilize from International Organizations, donor countries, and development partners will continue to support Lao PDR in this important task, and we do hope organization concerns will continue

cooperation and support to UXO victims in Lao PDR in order to achieve our common goal and objective.

Lastly, I would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to all international stakeholders for their support and assistance extended to our country.

Thank you