

**NPA Statement on Clearance and destruction of cluster munitions  
remnants and risk reduction education  
Eleventh Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions  
Geneva, 11-14 September 2023**

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Thank you, Mr. President,

We would like to thank you and the committee coordinators, Norway and Guyana, on your efforts on article 4 implementation and constructive engagement with the analysis group on the Article 4 extension requests.

Please allow me to begin by congratulating Bosnia and Herzegovina on fulfilling their Article 4 obligations. As an operator that has been on the ground and supporting Bosnia and Herzegovina from the start, we can attest that the hard work does pay off and this success stands as proof of the importance of this Convention in ensuring a country and its people can live safely, free of fear and threat of cluster munition contamination. Bosnia and Herzegovina achieved completion by showing the importance of a realistic, time-bound, detailed and solid workplan towards completion, as well as ensuring close cooperation between all stakeholders in country. We are grateful to Norway for consistently supporting the cluster munition clearance efforts, as well as Canada, Luxembourg, Switzerland and ITF.

The joyful news of Bosnia and Herzegovina completing its Article 4 obligations is warmly welcome and should serve as an encouragement to the other remaining affected States Parties that the Convention objectives are indeed quite attainable. States Parties should engage in completion initiatives to ensure timely and meaningful fulfillment of Article 4 obligations, as it is our joint responsibility to ensure that the Convention's objectives are fulfilled. Montenegro and Norway still stand as such an example, where the completion initiative was a great success. We welcome the Country Coalition approach in Lebanon with LMAC in partnership with the Netherlands, and the coordinating platform in Lao PDR chaired by the National regulatory authorities, and cochaired by UNDP and the US ambassador to Vientiane. These are positive examples, and we urge other affected states parties to follow suit and without delay; we should not prolong but be proactive in our joint effort to achieve a world free of cluster munition contamination.

As per the Mine Action Review Lausanne Action Plan monitoring, we are happy to see that all affected States Parties, apart from Somalia, have meet the Action1 indicator and demonstrate strong national ownership. This is not only crucial for fulfillment of clearance obligations, but a precondition for setting up sustainable residual contamination management capacities. We applaud Lebanon for including provision for the establishment of a sustainable national capacity to address residual contamination in their national strategy and encourage the other affected states parties to do so, as well.

Completion is not only about reaching a finish line, but it is about meaningfully fulfilling Article 4 obligations. We further encourage affected states parties to invest greater efforts in mainstreaming gender and diversity and integrate gender and diversity considerations into their national work plans and strategies, as per the Lausanne Action Plan, action 4.

We also hope to see more resources invested in research and knowledge sharing of innovative approaches to survey and clearance, also considering the environmental impact. We encourage other operators and national authorities to act to reduce their own environmental and climate impact, by reducing emissions, and assessing and mitigating adverse environmental impact from land release operations. NPA has an environmental management system aimed to identify risks and measures to reduce any adverse effects on the environment, systematically monitor impact and the implementation of mitigations measures, and enhance any positive effects contributing to climate resilience. The assessment and management tool is being rolled out in all NPA programmes from 2024, after being tested in NPA Vietnam and a few other programmes this year. NPA will be happy to share this work with the sector.

Finally, we cannot address clearance if we do not address the use and effect of cluster munitions. Our goal of ridding the world of cluster munitions contamination is further away with each cluster munition dropped, despite clearance level reaching its highest level this year. Therefore, any use, by any actor, under any circumstances remains unacceptable.

Thank you.