

**Agenda Item 3(c)**

**Clearance and Destruction of Cluster Munitions Remnants**

**On Lebanon's Extension Request**

**Statement by MAG**

*Check against delivery.*

Thank you, Mr. President.

Please allow me to congratulate you on your election as President of the Thirteenth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, underlining the vital role of the Republic of the Philippines in humanitarian disarmament. I would also like to compliment France and Italy for their effective work in coordinating this key element of the Convention.

In Lebanon, cluster munitions remnants remain a serious threat to people's lives and livelihoods, human and socio-economic development, and national recovery. The leadership and coordination of the Lebanon Mine Action Center have been instrumental in addressing the threats posed by cluster munitions remnants over the years, and this extension can ensure that progress continues in a structured and effective way. As an implementing partner of Lebanon's mine action programme for more than two decades, MAG of course expresses our full support.

It is important to acknowledge that the extension request was submitted in late November 2024, coinciding with the ceasefire that brought to an end months of hostilities with Israel. The devastation wreaked on Lebanon, especially in the south of the country, requires additional capacity and resources for recovery and reconstruction. This is also essential if Lebanon is to achieve the timeframe set out in the extension request, while also meeting these new humanitarian needs.

These most recent events highlight the essential value of the CCM as an instrument to protect civilians during and after conflict. The capacities already established through Lebanon's implementation of the CCM have proved vital in the national response, including risk education, victim assistance, survey, and emergency clearance. The strong and coordinated reaction of the Lebanese Government, supported by MAG and other partners, is a clear example of the effectiveness of the Convention as a framework for planning and for cooperation.

In this context, Lebanon's development of its own sustainable national capacity has been the lynchpin of the response, and it is also the means through which the country will ultimately become free of cluster munitions. Lebanon's establishment of a regional training school and exchange of technical expertise with other states is important contribution to the mine action community more broadly. Had this contribution been met with sustained donor support in previous years, populations displaced by the most recent conflict would not have been at risk from old cluster munition contamination in addition to its new challenges.

## **Convention on Cluster Munitions**

### **Intersessional Meetings 2025**

**7-8 April 2025, Palais des Nations, Geneva**



This request sends a strong signal that despite regional and global instability, Lebanon remains dedicated to its international obligations and the protection of human life. Given events since its development, it is even more important than ever that this commitment is met in the same spirit by the international community. As donors mobilise to respond to the need for stabilisation and recovery in Syria, we must not forget that this is not achievable without a sustainable recovery for Lebanon; and that the expertise available in Lebanon has a great deal to offer to its neighbours.

MAG stands firmly behind the Lebanon Mine Action Center in these endeavours and remains committed to supporting Lebanon in its path towards a future free from cluster munitions.

I thank you, Mr. President.