



**Convention on Cluster Munitions
Intersessional Meetings
April 2025**

**Statement by The HALO Trust
International Cooperation and Assistance**

Thank you, President.

We congratulate you on your Presidency and express our appreciation for your leadership at this challenging time for the Convention and we also thank the ISU team for their continued support. We particularly welcome that the Intersessional Meeting is taking place this year.

Since 2000, HALO has destroyed over 150,000 cluster munitions across 17 countries and territories. In 2024 alone, HALO teams destroyed over 14,000 submunitions, predominantly in Lao PDR, Ukraine, and Syria, but also in Cambodia, Kosovo, Libya, Angola, Yemen, and Northern Somalia. These statistics underscore not only the scale of contamination but also reflect HALO's sustained commitment across diverse and challenging environments. Our work has been enabled by strong partnerships with national authorities, built on data-led approaches and community-based delivery.

Allow me to highlight the evolving situations in Kosovo and Lao PDR, where continued international support will be key to completing the job.

In Kosovo, more than 7 million square metres of cluster munition-contaminated land remain. Since 1999, HALO and NPA have cleared over 6,300 submunitions and released 37.7 million square metres of land. Kosovo is now closer than ever to achieving cluster munition- and mine-impact-free status. However, progress is at risk. With existing funding set to end this year, and no clear indication of renewed support, clearance operations face a significant slowdown. This is a pivotal moment: with sustained donor engagement, Kosovo has a real opportunity to complete clearance and demonstrate what sustained national commitment and international cooperation can achieve under this Convention.

In Lao PDR, HALO has now moved from completing the full survey of Savannakhet Province to accelerating targeted clearance based on that data. As one of the largest mine action operators in the country, HALO employs 1,100 national staff—coming largely from affected communities—who are now working systematically to clear the highest-impact areas. We are particularly proud of our very high representation of women throughout all levels. The shift from survey to clearance at scale marks a new phase of implementation, made possible through close coordination with national authorities and a robust, GIS-based tasking approach. With adequate and sustained funding, priority contamination in Savannakhet could be cleared within the next decade—reducing risk and unlocking long-term development opportunities for thousands of people.

These examples speak to the broader success of the Convention, but also to the risks of losing momentum. While the world rightly responds to new and emerging crises, we must not forget the long-term commitments that have brought us this far. Contamination in Kosovo and Lao PDR may no longer make headlines, but the impact of continued clearance remains as urgent and life changing as ever, therefore the necessary international support is more crucial than ever.

President, we remain committed to working with States, communities, and our partners here today to ensure that clearance is completed, and that no community is left behind. Continued political will and donor engagement will be essential to realising the full humanitarian promise of this Convention.

Thank you.