

**Comments on Afghanistan Extension Request
by Mine Detection Center, CMC member**
*13th Meeting of States Parties of the Convention on Cluster Munitions
Geneva, 16-19 September 2025*

Mr. President,

Esteemed States Parties,

I speak on behalf of the Mine Detection Center (MDC) from Afghanistan, a national humanitarian demining organization, partner of the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA) and member of the Cluster Muniton Coalition (CMC).

MDC is honored to express its sincere appreciation to the States Parties, the United Nations, donor countries, the CCM Implementation Support Unit, and the wider international community for their sustained humanitarian support to Afghanistan. Your contributions have enabled MAPA to continue delivering lifesaving services to civilians who have suffered for decades from the presence of explosive ordnance, including cluster munition remnants (CMRs).

Your support has saved countless lives and facilitated the repatriation of refugees, the resumption of livelihoods, socio-economic reintegration, rehabilitation, and safe access to essential services.

Despite significant progress, Afghanistan remains one of the most heavily explosive ordnance (EO) contaminated countries in the world. On average, 50 civilians—80% of whom are children—fall victim to EO each month. While hundreds of casualties from cluster munitions have been officially documented, the real number is likely much higher, as many incidents classified as ERW-related may in fact be caused by cluster munition remnants.

CMR contamination has severely impacted over 21,000 civilians across 16 confirmed sites in 11 communities, 6 districts, and 4 provinces—covering approximately 9 square kilometers. With the increasing and often forced return of refugees from Iran and Pakistan, the number of people at risk is expected to rise further.

MAPA along with its partners remains strongly committed to fulfilling the obligations under Article 4 of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, as detailed in Afghanistan's Article 4 extension request for the period 2026–2029.

Clearance activities in three CMR sites in Bamyan and Samangan provinces have been already initiated, covering over 270,000 square meters. The remaining sites are pending technical survey under TNMA 08.20.02 (2024), which is expected to result in a considerable reduction in overall contamination size.

MDC, as part of MAPA, is working tirelessly to mobilize resources—from national systems, the private sector, regional actors, and the international community—to meet these goals.

With the adoption of enhanced land release methodologies, including both non-technical and technical surveys, MAPA is confident in its capacity to meet the targets laid out in the 3-year plan:

- 2026–27: 6 teams to clear 3.5 km²
- 2027–28: 5 teams to clear 2.9 km²
- 2028–29: 4 teams to clear 2.3 km²

In my capacity as Co-Lead of the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA), and on behalf of the communities affected by cluster munition remnants, the victims, and the broader MAPA partnership, I respectfully call upon the States Parties to approve Afghanistan's Article 4 extension request and to provide the much-needed support and assistance. Your continued commitment will not only save lives and protect children, but also facilitate the restoration of livelihoods, support socio-economic recovery, and ensure safe access to land and essential services.

Your kind attention and generous support are deeply appreciated by MDC, MAPA, and the affected communities across Afghanistan.

Thank you.