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Mr. President, distinguished colleagues,

This past year marks a milestone for explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) under the Convention on Cluster Munitions. The Twelfth Meeting of States Parties decoupled risk education from clearance and established a dedicated EORE coordinator within the CCM machinery. This shift was strategic: it signalled a crucial advance in the protection of civilians, ensuring risk education is prioritized and systematically embedded as a standalone thematic in Convention agendas.

As the first Risk Education Coordinator, Lao PDR led by drawing on its extensive EORE experience to set new benchmarks and drive practical initiatives.

A highlight of these contributions was the June workshop on "Moving from National Ownership to National Leadership," organized by Lao PDR with the support of the ISU and the GICHD. During the workshop, CCM States Parties Lao PDR, Colombia, Lebanon, and Somalia shared how national leadership has translated into strategic, targeted investments in risk education. Concrete examples include:

- Lao PDR integrated EORE as a standalone strategic goal into successive National Strategic Plans for the UXO sector and established a national, cross-ministerial EORE technical working group;
- Colombia has developed the most robust quality management system for EORE in the sector with an accreditation framework for all national, ethnic-territorial, and international organizations. It has also integrated EORE with broader policies such as the 2025 Comprehensive School Risk Management Policy, and as a tool for peacebuilding efforts;
- Lebanon demonstrated innovation and leadership through the joint integration of EORE and Conflict Preparedness and Protection (CPP) with IDPs during the latest conflict, helping achieve a reported 97% casualty reduction. It also represented national authorities at global level in the EORE Advisory Group for two years;

- Finally, Somalia conducted an EORE baseline assessment with the GICHD's support to define priorities, updated its EORE national standard in line with IMAS 12.10, and produced innovative IED risk education guidance.

These are tangible examples of how States Parties lead and prioritise EORE efforts. However, new and overlapping threats, such as new contamination, the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, and protracted emergencies, represent ongoing challenges.

To meet these, the sector has begun integrating EORE and Conflict Preparedness and Protection (CPP), shifting towards community preparedness and anticipatory action. Taken together, EORE and CPP provide the only immediate line of defence for many communities in contexts where clearance remains slow or suspended.

A recent study commissioned by Humanity & Inclusion provides a solid framework for the path ahead in integrating EORE and CPP. Yet, we collectively face persistent challenges such as:

- Integrating EORE and CPP into sustainable, dedicated funding streams, including national budgets and coordinated humanitarian mechanisms.
- Delivering EORE and CPP interventions in insecure and hard-to-reach areas.
- Raising the profile of EORE and CPP at the political level.

Addressing these requires bold steps. Lao PDR's working paper to this meeting offers some recommendations in this regard:

- Launching an Annual EORE National Experts Meeting to share best practice and address emerging challenges collectively.
- And seeking synergies with the APMBC, CCW, and the EWIPA Political Declaration to increased coordination and efficiency of EORE and CPP.

The GICHD looks forward to continuing to support Lao PDR in its capacity as President of the Third Review Conference as well as the new incoming RE coordinator, to address those challenges through investment in EORE and CPP.

Thank you, Mr. President.