

Statement by the Presidency of the Third Review Conference of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions On the Occasion of International Mine Awareness Day 2026.

Geneva, 4 April 2026:

On the occasion of International Mine Awareness Day 2026, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, in its capacity as Presidency of the Third Review Conference of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, reaffirms its commitment to ***“accelerating progress towards a world free from the threat of cluster munitions.”*** We join the United Nations Secretary - General in calling for strengthened national mine action capacities in countries where mines and explosive remnants of war constitute a serious threat to the safety, health, and lives of civilian populations, or an impediment to social and economic development at the national and local levels.

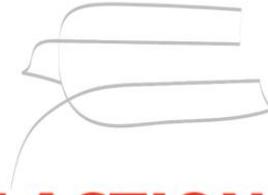
This year's theme – *“Invest in peace, invest in mine action”* – highlights the need to accelerate clearance, enhance risk education, and expand victim assistance in affected communities. As a country heavily impacted by explosive remnants of war, the Lao PDR has experienced first-hand the devastating and persistent effects of these inhumane weapons. Over the past five decades, unexploded ordnance (UXO) has impeded development and tragically claimed lives and injured innocent people, with children among the most vulnerable.

Like other affected countries, the Lao PDR shares the common aspiration to make our world free from the dangers posed by explosive remnants of war. To achieve this goal, we believe it is crucial to promote the universalization and effective implementation of relevant international instruments and treaties. As a committed party to many of these frameworks, we place particular emphasis on the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), which has brought renewed hope to our affected communities.

Our national strategy, *Safe Path Forward III (2021–2030)*, integrates UXO action into our broader development agenda, including through our national SDG 18: *Lives Safe from UXO*. In these efforts, partnerships with States Parties, international organizations, and civil society have been instrumental in clearing contaminated land, delivering risk education, supporting survivors, and facilitating the return of land for agriculture and infrastructure development. For the Lao PDR, the CCM is more than a disarmament treaty; it is a pathway to peace, development, and dignity.

Today, on the occasion of International Mine Awareness Day 2026, we call for continued investments and partnerships under the CCM and other relevant frameworks to deliver meaningful impact in the lives of those living in affected communities. We also encourage all States that have not yet done so to join the Convention, thereby reinforcing our collective pursuit of a world free of cluster munitions.

INVEST IN PEACE



INVEST IN **MINE ACTION**

Mine action is not only about removing explosives from the ground.

It is about restoring safety.

It is about enabling opportunity.

It is about protecting communities.

It is about rebuilding trust.

It is about laying the foundations of lasting peace.
