

Gender and Diversity Working Group Statement to 2nd Preparatory Meeting of the 3rd Review
Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions

Thank you, Mr. President. I am pleased to take the floor on behalf of the 14 members of the Gender and Diversity in Mine Action Working Group - Amputee Self-Help Network Uganda, APOPO, Colombian Campaign to Ban Landmines, Danish Church Aid, Danish Refugee Council, Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, the HALO Trust, Humanity and Inclusion, ICBL-CMC, Mines Advisory Group, Mines Action Canada, Mine Action Review, SEHLAC and my own organization Norwegian People's Aid.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide some brief comments on the inclusion of language regarding gender and diversity in the most recent draft of the Vientiane Capital Action Plan (VCAP). The draft VCAP broadly addresses the recommendations of the Gender and Diversity in Mine Action Working Group (GDWG) despite inconsistencies in language and a slight decrease in the number and prominence of mentions of gender and diversity in the text than in the expiring Lausanne Action Plan (LAP). The language and commitments on inclusion in the draft Vientiane Capital Action Plan are intended to improve the operational effectiveness of cluster munitions responses across all areas of the convention including survey and clearance, risk education, and victim assistance. As organisations working in these fields every day, the Working Group attests that effective mine action requires a gender and diversity sensitive approach. This is reinforced in the International Mine Action Standards, national mine action strategies and policies, and the organisational policies and procedures of Working Group members.

We have some brief, specific comments. When possible, the previously agreed language from the LAP “gender, age, disability as well as the diversity of populations” should be used.

In Action #4, the second sentence lists a small number of diversity factors that affect implementation, but not all of them. Specifically, listing all diversity factors will result in the text becoming much longer and will necessitate including more controversial factors such as displacement, religion, combatant status, conflict affiliation, and so on. Additionally, replacing needs, vulnerabilities and perspectives with just perspectives is not preferable in this action. Previously agreed language “Ensure that the different needs, vulnerabilities and perspectives of women, girls, boys and men from diverse populations and all ages are considered and inform the implementation of the Convention” is preferable.

Finally, the group welcomes the addition of an indicator on the percentage of States Parties reporting the percentage of women among staff engaged in national implementation. Data provided by affected states on women's participation in CCM implementation helps to strengthen the links between the CCM and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda.

Thank you.