

Cluster Munitions Convention
Third Review Conference
14.-18.09.2026

Item 9 (d) – Risk Education
Statement by Austria

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Mr. President,

We would like to commend the coordinator, the Lebanese Republic, for taking over the role as risk education coordinator and thank you for the comprehensive report on your activities. Lebanon has shared experiences and valuable good practices on risk education in a very challenging environment that will surely be invaluable in guiding our discussions during this Review Conference and in the future.

The role of risk education in our work cannot be overstated. Clearance can be a painstakingly slow and costly endeavor, and is sometimes impossible in conflict situations. As a result, communities might not see clearance achieved in their lifetimes. Therefore, risk education is of particular importance as the often last resort for the protection of civilians. It can empower individuals and affected communities and provide them with a life line and long-term perspective to protect themselves. Local ownership and community-based, grass-root approaches are vital for this type of work and we encourage engagement and exchanges with survivors and affected communities in this regard. We welcome the inclusion of a specific action on risk education in the Vientiane Capital Action Plan that recognizes the importance of including local, community-informed perspectives by affected populations.

Throughout this work, risk education must follow people, not only contamination. Groups of people such as refugees, internally displaced persons, aid workers, and nomads are particularly exposed to high risks as they often transit through contaminated areas. This highlights the complexity of the challenge we are dealing with as well as the need for people-based, tailor-made solutions.

Mr. President,

According to the Cluster Munition Monitor, 42% of victims of cluster munitions are children. Focusing risk education measures on children is therefore pertinent. Integrating risk education into school curricular and community-based activities seems to be particularly promising. We also note with concern that the majority of casualties are men and boys, which calls for gender-responsive and behavioral change approaches to risk education.

Not only for clearance and victim assistance efforts, but also for risk education, ensuring access can also be a significant challenge. However, thanks to new technologies, information and training opportunities

have become easier to access and we commend those working on such solutions and see this work as promising to be further discussed.

Thank you.