

Statement by Colonel Ali Makki
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Agenda item 9(d): Risk Education

Madam/Mr. President, Excellencies, colleagues,

I have the honor to deliver this statement on developments in risk education, on behalf of Lebanon, in its capacity as Risk Education Coordinator of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. At the outset, allow me to thank Lao PDR, the first Risk Education Coordinator, for laying the foundation of this role, and the ISU and the GICHD for their support throughout Lebanon's mandate.

Key developments in risk education, 2022–2026

Since the Second Review Conference, risk education has moved from being folded into clearance coordination to standing as its own pillar of this Convention's work. In 2024, States Parties designated a dedicated Risk Education Coordinator and established risk education as a distinct agenda item, reflecting its growing professionalization and strategic importance in achieving the humanitarian goals of our convention. Lao PDR held the role through the 13MSP cycle. Lebanon has held it since.

Ten affected States Parties have reported annually on risk education across this cycle, and integration into national strategies rose from eight in 2022 to all ten by the 12MSP and 13MSP cycles. Nine of these ten also consistently reported tailored, context-specific risk education.

On evidence, reporting on disaggregated data rose from five States Parties in 2022 to seven by the 13MSP, and reporting on impact-oriented, outcome-based measures rose from zero to five over the same period. This is real, if partial, progress. Reporting nonetheless remains largely activity-based and often descriptive, with limited systematic disaggregation by age, sex, disability or geography, which continues to constrain our ability to demonstrate effectiveness. Increasing attention is being given to adopting approaches for people with disabilities and other at-risk groups, though this remains uneven, as does national coordination more broadly.

But the most consequential development of this cycle is not statistical. It is a shift in who tells the story of risk education under this Convention. A standing Coordinator role, held first by Lao PDR and now by Lebanon, has given affected States Parties themselves a platform to shape good practice, name their own challenges, and speak as experts. We believe this is a development this Convention should protect and build on.

Lebanon's mandate: work undertaken this past year

Lebanon assumed this role in a year our own country faced renewed hostilities. LMAC and its partners delivered emergency

risk education alongside Conflict Preparedness and Protection (CPP) interventions for internally displaced persons, training community liaison officers and reaching populations through community sessions, mass media and emergency assistance. It was not a comfortable pivot, but it showed this sector can adapt quickly, under real pressure, when it has to. This combined approach, EORE and CPP, allow to reduce casualties.

In line with our annual Work Plan, Lebanon led a discussion on risk education during the Coordination Committee retreat in January, and a Consultation Workshop in June, bringing States Parties, national authorities and civil society together to take stock of the Lausanne Action Plan and inform the Vientiane Capital Action Plan. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, and Lao PDR shared national experience alongside Lebanon. The EORE Advisory Group's 2025 survey of 130 practitioners across 30 countries found emergency risk education and CPP among the top emerging needs, and integration with other sectors as the area where practitioners want increased focus. That evidence base, together with Article 7 reporting, has directly shaped the Action 28 text now before this Review Conference.

Observations: priorities ahead

Some challenges remain:

The first is measurement and qualitative reporting. As highlighted in the review document, risk education is increasingly evidence-based and community-centred. Yet across the Convention we remain far better at counting activities than demonstrating what

they change. Action 28 rightly puts outcome-level reporting at its centre. We now need to embrace more systematically social and behaviour change approaches and share stories of change.

The second is prioritizing risk education at political level and funding it. Globally, cluster munitions killed or injured at least 1,063 people in 2025 - one of the highest annual totals the Monitor has recorded. The actual number is likely higher still, as many casualties go unreported. Yet resources have not kept pace with this need. The disruptions in funding many States Parties experienced in 2025 showed just how far this support still is from predictable and sustained, at the very moment needs are rising. States Parties leading this sector cannot sustain that leadership without resources behind it.

Building on the good practice that has defined this cycle, we call upon States Parties, donors, and partners to fully support the implementation of Action 28 of the Vientiane Capital Action Plan by:

- Ensuring robust and sustainable funding for EORE and CPP projects;
- Enhancing EORE mainstreaming in emergencies, development, peacebuilding and climate resilience, in populated but also remote or underserved areas;
- Supporting affected States Parties in maintaining active local and national leadership and participation in Convention mechanisms, including the work of the RE Coordinator.

We ask States Parties to treat these commitments as the minimum standard this sector now needs to meet, and to keep backing the national leadership that has defined this cycle - leadership that no other disarmament instrument has yet institutionalised in this way. Lebanon looks forward to co-hosting, with Lao PDR and the support of the GICHD and ISU, a side event during this Review Conference to take the conversation further.

I thank you, Madam/Mr. President.