



ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC)

INTERVENTION

Third Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions
Vientiane, Lao PDR

AGENDA ITEM 9(c): INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE

ARMAC welcomes the report of the Coordinators on International Cooperation and Assistance, **Switzerland and the Kingdom of the Netherlands**, and expresses its appreciation for their work in supporting the implementation of **Article 6**. International cooperation and assistance remains essential to translating the commitments of the Convention into sustainable implementation. From ARMAC's regional experience in Southeast Asia, effective cooperation is not only about the level of resources available. It is also about **how needs are identified, how expertise and resources are matched to those needs, and how assistance strengthens sustainable national capacity.**

Mr. President,

ARMAC would like to highlight **three considerations for strengthening international cooperation and assistance.**

FIRST – cooperation should begin with nationally identified priorities and strengthen national ownership.

Affected countries have different contamination profiles, institutional arrangements, technical capacities and development priorities. Assistance is therefore most effective when it responds to clearly identified national needs and reinforces existing national strategies, institutions and systems. This requires sustained dialogue between affected States, assisting States, implementing organisations and technical partners so that available resources and expertise can be aligned with national priorities across clearance, risk education, victim assistance, information management and other relevant areas of implementation.

SECOND – cooperation should make better use of regional and South-South expertise.

Considerable technical and institutional experience already exists within affected regions. Across ASEAN, Member States have developed practical experience in areas including survey and land release, information management, risk education, victim assistance, national standards, quality management and the application of technology. Regional cooperation can help make this expertise more accessible by enabling countries to learn directly from one another, adapt relevant practices to their national contexts and develop longer-term institutional relationships.

ARMAC's role is to facilitate these connections — **linking nationally identified needs with relevant expertise available within the region and, where appropriate, with international technical and development partners.** This can complement traditional international assistance and contribute to stronger **South-South and triangular cooperation.**

THIRD – assistance should build sustainable capacity and avoid fragmentation and duplication.

Short-term projects can address immediate needs, but sustainable implementation requires institutions, technical capacity, information systems and national expertise that remain after individual projects conclude.

Regional mechanisms can support greater continuity by facilitating information exchange, identifying common capacity needs, connecting complementary initiatives and helping partners understand where their assistance can provide the greatest added value. For ARMAC, coordination does not mean creating additional layers or replacing existing bilateral and multilateral cooperation. It means helping **connect national, regional and international efforts so that they reinforce one another.**

Mr. President,

From our regional experience, ARMAC sees three priorities going forward: **keeping national ownership at the centre of assistance; expanding practical South-South and triangular cooperation; and investing in sustainable national and regional capacity.**

Effective implementation of **Article 6** requires both sides of the partnership: affected States articulating clear priorities and needs, and States and organisations in a position to assist responding with coordinated, predictable and appropriate support.

ARMAC remains committed to working with ASEAN Member States, States Parties, the United Nations, international and regional organisations, civil society, donors and technical partners to facilitate knowledge exchange, capacity development and practical cooperation. Looking ahead, international cooperation and assistance should not only respond to immediate implementation needs, but also strengthen the national capacities, institutions and partnerships required to sustain progress over the long term.

Thank you, Mr. President.