

Second Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions
25 – 27 November 2020
Virtual/ Switzerland

Address by Norwegian People's Aid

Delivered by
Kristina Duric, Advisor and Lucy Pinches, Project Manager of Mine Action Review

Part 1 of NPA Statement (delivered by Kristina Duric)

Thank you, Mr President,

Ten years since its entry into force, the Convention on Cluster Munitions continues to be of great importance globally and we applaud its successes so far. NPA has been steadfastly committed to the Convention, from advocating for its creation, celebrating the signing ceremony in Oslo, and in supporting affected States Parties implement it through our clearance and stockpile destruction programmes globally.

We congratulate Croatia and Montenegro on their achievements in fulfilling Article 4 obligations within the initial 10-year commitment. NPA is proud to have been working both in Croatia and more recently in Montenegro where we had an excellent partnership with the Ministry of Interior. We commend the success of Country Coalition approach between Norway and Montenegro, which supported the timely completion effort.

We invite all affected States Parties to learn from Montenegro and Croatia and commit political will, enhance national ownership, and set realistic Article 4 completion plans with transparent and needs-based prioritisation, aimed at fulfilling the Convention obligations as soon as possible.

On the road to completion it is important to consider *how* we get to the finish line. **We invite all States Parties, civil society, and donors to improve gender and diversity mainstreaming within our sector.** Effective and efficient clearance can only be achieved if the sector response is designed and implemented in a gender and diversity sensitive and responsive manner. We must ensure everyone's needs are accounted for and reflected, both in the work that we do, as well as within our respective internal *modus operandi*. This in turn will set a solid foundation for gender and diversity mainstreaming within residual contamination management by affected countries. **We further invite all parties to improve environmental safeguarding in their clearance effort towards Article 4 fulfilment.**

NPA draw attention to the use of cluster munitions in recent conflicts, including in Syria and Nagorno-Karabakh. **We call on all parties to all armed conflicts to refrain from any use of cluster munitions. We also call on all States to join the Convention on Cluster Munitions, without further delay.** Cluster

munitions are imprecise weapons with wide area effects, and remain on the ground long after a conflict has ended, and as such indiscriminately impact civilians; they must be universally banned and their use has to stop immediately. Lives and wellbeing of civilians must be protected by all parties to the conflict at all times, without exception.

Finally, NPA welcomes harmonization between the Oslo Action Plan and the Lausanne Action Plan, not to duplicate, but rather emphasise and coordinate the sector's efforts towards achieving a mine and cluster munition free world in our nearest future.

NPA also wishes to align ourselves with the statement of the Gender Working Group, of which we are a Member.

Thank you and I would like to now hand over the floor to my NPA colleague Lucy Pinches who will make the second half of the NPA statement on behalf of Mine Action Review.

Part 2 of NPA Statement (delivered by Lucy Pinches, on behalf of Mine Action Review)

Thank you, Mr President.

In the ten years since the Convention on Cluster Munitions became legally binding, **close to one million submunitions have been destroyed** during survey and clearance operations globally and **more than 766 square kilometres of cluster munition-contaminated area has been cleared**. This averages **over 250 submunitions destroyed every single day for 10 years**. An impressive achievement.

In 2019 alone, a global total of **more than 130 square kilometres was cleared** of cluster munition remnants, a new annual high, and equivalent to more than eight times the size of Geneva. During 2019 **more than 132,000 unexploded submunitions** were destroyed during clearance and survey operations globally.

This is in large part thanks to the methodology for the survey and clearance of cluster munition remnants which has significantly improved over the last decade, with **high-quality evidence-based survey** being increasingly employed to good effect, enabling the effective targeting of clearance and efficient use of resources.

Mine Action Review warmly congratulates **Croatia** and **Montenegro** for their completion of cluster munition clearance in July 2020, which occurred within the original 10-year Convention deadline of both.

This leaves **25 States and three other areas with cluster munition-contaminated areas**, of which 10 are States Parties. State Party **Mauritania** has been added back onto the list this year.

With the exception of the two most heavily contaminated States Parties, **Lao PDR** and **Iraq**, all other affected States Parties should be in a position to fulfil their Article 4 clearance obligations by the Third Review Conference in 2025. But it will require **strong national ownership, elaboration of concrete**

action plans, application of efficient land release methodology, and sufficient and sustained funding through to completion.

The draft **Lausanne Action Plan** encompasses all these elements, and can be viewed as a **blueprint for implementation**, supporting States Parties to reach completion in the best way possible – efficiently, effectively, safely, and inclusively. It's excellent to see **gender and diversity** and the **environment** firmly embedded in the draft Action Plan.

Mine Action Review also welcomes the promotion of **country coalitions**, or equivalent national-level platforms, which we know can improve coordination and help identify and overcome stumbling blocks in Article 4 implementation.

Once adopted, Mine Action Review plans to provide civil society monitoring and analysis of the implementation of the **Lausanne Action Plan** next year, for **indicators relating to survey and clearance**.

Progress between now and the Third Review conference in 2025 will require firm commitment by all, honest reflection, and rising collectively to the challenge to always do better. We hope that Mine Action Review's **Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2020** country reports can serve as a good tool for discussion to facilitate such dialogue.

Thank you.