

Gender Mainstreaming
Statement by the Gender and Diversity Working Group to
the 10th Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on
Cluster Munitions

Thank you Chair and thank you to France and Namibia for their work this year.

I am honoured to take the floor on behalf of the Gender and Diversity Working Group, which includes representatives from the Colombian Campaign to Ban Landmines, DanChurchAid, Danish Refugee Council, the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, The HALO Trust, Humanity & Inclusion, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines-Cluster Munition Coalition (ICBL-CMC), Mines Advisory Group, the Mine Action Review, Norwegian People's Aid, SEHLAC and my own organization Mines Action Canada.

As civil society organizations committed to inclusive and effective mine action, we are pleased to see some progress being made on the implementation of the gender and diversity provisions in the Lausanne Action Plan one year after adoption. We welcome the interest in this topic and we appreciated hearing from so many supportive states this morning.

We commend the Gender Focal Points for their work to draft Terms of Reference for these new roles, and we hope they will use their position to request additional information on gender from States Parties. Requesting additional information is very important as we are seeing very few

affected states with survey and clearance work plans that include gender and diversity. Only 7 States Parties collected and analysed data disaggregated by gender, age and disability to assess the needs of cluster munition victims and only 13 States Parties reported on gender mainstreaming this year. However, we also understand that a lack of reporting does not always signal a lack of action. We encourage all States Parties to integrate gender and an intersectional approach to diversity into their strategies, work plans and reporting, as these considerations are essential in all aspects of mine action.

Now we would like to address the questions posed by the presidency in the 10MSP Progress Report. States Parties should improve reporting on the LAP with regards to gender mainstreaming by including information on gender and diversity across all sections of the annual Article 7 reports. Reporting is a crucial obligation of the Convention, and is very important to ensuring we can effectively and accurately assess the implementation of the LAP. We stand ready to engage with the Presidency and the Coordination Committee over the next year to further strengthen this work.

Engagement in Convention meetings should reflect the diversity of our communities. Meaningful participation of women in these forums continues to be disappointingly low.

Many members of the Working Group have taken concrete actions to improve participation of women and diverse people in meetings and the work of the Convention more broadly. For example, many organizations have strong

parental leave policies enabling equal opportunities for men and women to take sufficient time off work to care for their children; some have child care policies which equally allow women and men to return to their jobs after having children. Since care responsibilities are often a major barrier to women's participation in the work force especially for jobs that require travel, such as attending convention meetings, recognizing the importance of care work and offering flexible solutions to parents can help reduce gender inequality in the work force and the meeting room.

Funding is also barrier which should continue to be addressed through the sponsorship program for states and through funding for civil society organizations to ensure diverse voices are present and actively participating in meetings. Another barrier to diversifying Convention meetings is the perception of who belongs in these rooms and sitting behind this microphone. In our field, expertise does not always have a security background or multiple degrees, wear a suit or speak fluent English but too often those criteria are used to determine who attends Convention meetings.

One way to increase diverse participation in the Convention meetings is to consider other sources of expertise; such as inviting and consulting with representatives from women survivor networks, or underrepresented groups to attend these Conventions alongside, or in lieu of the usual attendees.

This week, MAC with the support from donors, has sponsored 22 young people involved in mine action from over a dozen countries, to attend this meeting. To bring these Mine Action Fellows here required not just sponsorship including airfare, accommodation and per diems, but also support obtaining visas, help with registration and for those who do not speak one of the UN languages an interpreter. Then as we prepared for this meeting and throughout the week we've had training sessions including one happening now and mentoring to ensure that everyone felt they belong in this room because they do. If we want greater meaningful participation of women, survivors, youth and other underrepresented groups in Convention meetings, we must think beyond financial sponsorship.

Finally, we would like to thank the presidencies of the CCM and the Mine Ban Treaty for co-sponsoring our workshop on "Best practices and lessons learned from practical mainstreaming of gender and diversity in mine action". The workshop's success demonstrated the importance of ongoing dialogue and learning on these topics. As the Gender and Diversity Working Group, we remain committed to promoting diverse participation and gender and diversity mainstreaming in all areas of the Convention.

Thank you.