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# Convention on Cluster Munitions

13 October 2010

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## First Meeting of the States Parties

Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic

9–12 November 2010

Item 11 of the provisional agenda

### Operation and status of the Convention

#### Draft

#### No cluster munitions: from vision to action the 2010 Vientiane declaration

#### Submitted by the President-Designate

1. We, the representatives of the States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, together with representatives from other States present as observers, the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Cluster Munition Coalition gathered for the First Meeting of States Parties to the Convention in Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic, one of the most severely affected States, affirm our commitment to end the harm caused by cluster munitions.

2. We note with satisfaction that the Convention on Cluster Munitions establishes a categorical ban on cluster munitions and requires the elimination of stockpiles, the clearance of contaminated land and the provision of assistance to victims. By these actions it aims to protect civilians throughout the world from future use and to improve the lives of those already impacted by these weapons.

3. Inspired by the achievements of many States in addressing the harm caused by cluster munitions we recognize the need to accelerate our work. As we enter this new phase of implementation of the Convention, we must now turn our *vision into action* and the *Vientiane Action Plan* translates our legal obligations into concrete actions. We will strengthen our efforts to raise the necessary national and international resources to overcome the remaining challenges and deliver tangible results and dividends to those individuals and communities that need continued support.

#### Decades of harm

4. Due to their wide area effects and high level of unexploded ordnance, cluster munitions kill indiscriminately and cause unacceptable harm to women, men, boys and girls both during and long after conflicts. They constitute a serious threat to peace, human security and development. Cluster munition remnants have severe consequences for affected individuals and their communities, and pose severe impediments to the

achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, poverty eradication and social and economic development.

### **Reducing the risks**

5. We recognize the rights of cluster munition victims and State Parties' obligation to provide them with adequate age- and gender- sensitive assistance, including medical care, rehabilitation, psychological support and social and economic inclusion.

6. Affected and non-affected States need to cooperate and mobilize resources to assist victims, provide risk reduction education, clearance of cluster munition remnants and destruction of stockpiled cluster munitions. We welcome the many initiatives already taken by States Parties towards these goals and encourage all others to enhance their efforts to rapidly advance the full implementation of the Convention.

7. We commend the States Parties and also States not party that have completed the clearance of contaminated areas and/or destruction of their cluster munition stockpiles even in advance of the Convention's entry into force.

8. We are concerned that billions of cluster sub-munitions are still stockpiled and that the extensive contaminated areas that remain pose a continued threat of new human suffering. Accelerated clearance and destruction of cluster munitions is an urgent imperative and risk reduction education is critical to ensure awareness of the dangers posed to civilians who live in or come in proximity to contaminated areas.

9. We welcome the 108 States that have signed the Convention on Cluster Munitions and the [42] States that have ratified it. This includes most of the affected countries and many former users, producers and stockpilers. We welcome new States Parties, call on all signatories to ratify and urge States not yet party to the Convention to join as soon as possible and we condemn the use of cluster munitions by any actor. Our aim is universal adherence to the Convention.

10. We are proud that the Convention is a contribution to the strengthening of International Humanitarian Law. It sets a new standard by which states will be judged. We believe the sea change in the opinion of governments around the world towards this weapon will continue.

11. Our achievements are the result of partnership between States, international organisations and civil society. The Oslo Process is proof that it is possible for this partnership to take bold, visionary and decisive action to solve our collective problems and is a testament to the importance of humanitarian disarmament in global affairs. As long as people remain at risk, we are compelled to do more to achieve our collective goal – a world with no cluster munitions.

### **Achieving a world free of cluster munitions**

12. To achieve our goal of a world free of cluster munitions, we hereby commit to:

(a) *implement* fully all of the obligations under the Convention, including ceasing the use, development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, retention and transfer of cluster munitions and to honour our commitments in the *Vientiane Action Plan*;

(b) *accelerate* progress on clearance and stockpile destruction, expand the coverage of services for victims and survivors and increase the level of resources provided for these tasks so that all States Parties can fulfill their obligations within the deadlines provided under the Convention, aiming to save lives and limbs, protect personal security and integrity and preserve livelihoods;

(c) *ensure* an early start to the destruction of cluster munition stockpiled in our States with the aim to avoid any extension requests;

(d) *enhance* our cooperation with international organizations and civil society to immediately accelerate efforts to rapidly advance the full implementation of the Convention, particularly in the areas of clearance, victim assistance and stockpile destruction;

(e) *provide* timely and thorough transparency reports on all obligations under this Convention in order to identify needs, potential challenges and to note and communicate progress;

(f) *fulfill* our legal obligation to promote the norms of the Convention which sets a new standard for the conduct of armed conflict and should be accepted by all States.

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