

Statement on International Cooperation and Assistance
7th Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions
5 September 2017



Thank you, Mr. President.

A strong commitment to cooperation and assistance to rid the world of cluster munitions was key in the negotiations of the Convention on Cluster Munitions back in 2008 and earlier. The culture of greed and hatred and war that brought us cluster munitions, and that destroyed so many lives, was to be replaced by a culture of cooperation for peace and justice. These inhumane weapons were to be banned and destroyed and cleared from the earth. The rights of those victimized were to be respected and their needs met. Back in Oslo we cheered this cooperation, this new era in disarmament. So where are we in 2017?

Regarding clearance and survivor assistance, Germany and other partners worked this year to steer the conversation about “country coalitions.” The Coordinators arranged meetings between donors and affected states to discuss enhanced partnerships. In the context of landmines, we have seen states coming together to support Colombia and we have seen how Norway and Mozambique partnered closely to complete mine clearance. We encourage states in this room to try out a similar approach in the context of cluster munitions, mindful that:

- First -- Among affected states, national ownership is critical for effective partnering. Country coalitions should address implementation needs as identified through plans and strategies developed by affected countries themselves. As well as contributing local expertise, affected states need to allocate some financial support from their own budgets, as some have done already.
- Second -- Strong parallels can be drawn between “country coalitions” and the “individualized approach” of the Mine Ban Treaty, which is a platform for affected states to provide information on their needs, and offers an opportunity to connect with the donor community.
- Third -- We encourage you to try out a concerted approach with a volunteer state. This will require trust between partners, and the willingness to speak out about challenges. Non-governmental clearance partners and victim assistance partners will be crucial in this dialogue.

The test will be what action emerges that enhances safety and dignity of life for affected people.

Cooperative action on universalization and condemnation of new use by non-signatories has demonstrated how cooperation and assistance goes beyond the provision of financial and technical support.

We have no complete and definitive figures yet on financial contributions to mine action by donors and affected states in 2016. From the data we have already compiled, it appears that there is a modest increase in funding in 2016 compared with 2015 -- which would stop the downward trend of the past three years. We applaud those that are providing resources to eliminate cluster munitions.

[Check against delivery: Given that obligations vis-a-vis victims should be realized through specific victim assistance efforts but also through broader efforts, we remind states to ensure that non-mine action contributions to mine-affected countries are relevant to the needs of victims and improve their quality of life amongst that of the broader population.]

Political will and financial commitment to finishing the job and upholding the rights of victims by both affected and donor states will determine whether the bright hopes of Oslo are brought to fruition. We look forward to hearing about brave new initiatives in the next days. Make sure you let us know so we also are energized and the partnership between civil society and states is refreshed.

Onward and upward with cooperation and assistance!

Thank you.