

**Statement on Clearance**  
**Ninth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions**  
**2-4 September 2019**



Thank you, Mr. President.

In 2018, more than 128km<sup>2</sup> of cluster munition-contaminated area was released through clearance. This total is the **highest ever recorded for a single year's clearance**. More than 135,000 submunitions were destroyed during clearance and technical survey operations.

The Ninth Meeting of States Parties has been asked to approve the first Article 4 deadline extension requests, with Germany and Lao PDR both requesting a five-year extension, the maximum permitted under the Convention. Given the massive contamination on its territory – the request by Lao PDR was both foreseen and justified.

Among the **12 States Parties affected by cluster munition remnants**, only three — Afghanistan, Croatia, and Montenegro — are expected to meet their Article 4 deadlines for clearance. The CMC commends these three States Parties. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Germany, Iraq, Lao PDR, and Lebanon are not currently on track. Chad, Chile, Somalia, and the United Kingdom will not only miss their Article 4 deadlines based on current output, they did not even conduct *any* survey or clearance of cluster munition-contaminated area in 2018. Compliance with their treaty obligations is increasingly open to question.

With national leadership, solid completion plans, sustained funding, and evidence-based survey and clearance, States Parties with medium or light contamination should all be able to meet their original 10-year Article 4 clearance deadlines.

However, four years on from the First Review Conference it is evident that many affected States Parties are not living up to the commitments made in the 2015 **Dubrovnik Action Plan**. This includes a failure to achieve “clarity” on the location, scope, and extent of cluster munition remnants within two years and to begin implementing national clearance strategies and plans within one year.

*But* there is still time to remedy the situation. If they act quickly, States Parties can come to the **Second Review Conference** next year ready to report that they have made significant progress in these two key aspects of Article 4 implementation and are complying with their treaty obligations.

We encourage all States Parties who are in a position to offer support to work with affected States Parties to establish **Country Coalitions**. These can serve as excellent platforms for national authorities to work in collaboration with donors, clearance operators, and partner organisations to achieve efficient Article 4 fulfilment.

Central to this is honest and constructive analysis to identify challenges and how to overcome them, so that finite resources can be better targeted. We, therefore, also encourage all stakeholders to make use of **Mine Action Review's Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants** report, which includes country-specific assessments of national survey and clearance programme performance and recommendations for action.

Thank you.