



Kingdom of the Netherlands

**Statement on behalf of the Article 4 Analysis Group
(Netherlands, Peru and Sweden)**

delivered by

Mr. Reint Vogelaar, First Secretary

at

**9th Meeting of States Parties to the
Convention on Cluster Munitions**

on

**Conclusions of the Analysis Group on the extension
request by Lao People's Democratic Republic**

Geneva, 2 September 2019

Mr. President, Excellencies, distinguished colleagues,

I have the honour to present the analysis of the article 4 extension request by Lao People's Democratic Republic on behalf of the Analysis Group for article 4, made up of Peru, Sweden and the Netherlands. In line with section C of the methodology, Lao PDR was excused from the Group to avoid a conflict of interest.

Lao PDR signed the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) on 3 December 2008 and ratified on 18 March 2009. It was among the first 30 ratifications that led to the Convention's entry into force on 1 August 2010. Under Article 4 of the Convention, Lao PDR is obliged to fulfil its clearing obligations by 1 August 2020. At the Eighth Meeting of States Parties (8MSP) of the CCM, Lao PDR informed States Parties that it would be unable to fulfil its obligations under Article 4 by that date and notified the States Parties its intention to submit an extension request.

On 26 February 2019, Lao PDR submitted its final request for a 5-year extension of its Article 4 deadline until 1 August 2025. This request and accompanying annexes has been made available on the Convention's website.

The final requests took into account the comments and observations made by the Analysis Group, both in writing and through a meeting with delegates from Lao PDR's National Regulatory Authority for the UXO/Mine Action Sector (NRA) on the basis of an initial submission.

In the interest of time, I will not go into the details of the request as submitted by Lao PDR, but go straight into the conclusions by the Analysis Group.

The Analysis Group is fully aware of the challenges that Lao PDR faces in implementing Article 4. The effort of clearing land contaminated with explosive sub-munitions is likely to continue over many years beyond the 5-year extension requested, due to the world's highest level of contamination.

Having said this the Analysis Group notes that Lao PDR does not yet have a reliable estimate of the extent of its CMR contamination. Therefore, the Analysis Group strongly supports the increased efforts described in the work plan of the extension request to carry out Non-Technical Surveys and Technical Surveys, with a view of having an improved understanding of the scope of CMR contamination in Lao PDR at the end of the new requested deadline.

It is commendable that Lao PDR has sought the input of all relevant stakeholders to provide a work plan for its extension request that is flexible and can incorporate the further development and implementation of an evidence-based methodology to survey and clear cluster munition remnants.

The Group also notes that the plan's success is contingent upon stable funding and retaining strong partnerships with international stakeholders, among other factors needed to create an environment conducive to increase the capacity and efficiency of clearance activities. In this context, the Analysis Group recommends the establishment of a country coalition in Lao PDR to enhance coordination in implementing the work plan included in its extension request.

Given the various factors that influence the implementation of the work plan contained in the extension request, the Analysis Group is of the view that Lao PDR should continue to annually update the Meeting of States Party or Review Conference on the following points:

- a) Progress made relative to the commitments contained in Lao PDR's work plan during the extension period.
- b) Updated information on remaining contamination disaggregated in a manner consistent with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), including land release standards.
- c) Updated detailed annual plans for the implementation of its extension request based on new information gathered from survey activities.

- d) Resource mobilization efforts and external financing received and resources made available by the Government of Lao PDR to support implementation efforts.
- e) Information on Lao PDR's efforts to ensure that UXO and explosive submunitions clearance and support victims is considered within national development plans and other relevant plans which may benefit Lao PDR's resource mobilization efforts.
- f) Other relevant information or pertinent developments as necessary.

I thank you for your attention.