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

Statement given under Clearance and destruction of cluster munition remnants and risk reduction education (item 9 (c)).

Mr. President,

In 2018 alone more than 128km² of land was released after clearance and 135,000 submunitions were destroyed. These are the highest ever recorded numbers in a single year in this Convention's lifetime and something to take great pride in.

A year before the Convention's second Review Conference we have seen at least 844,000 unexploded submunitions destroyed over the last nine years, resulting in a countless number of lives saved and people returning to their homes and livelihoods. However, 12 State Parties, two signatories and 3 other areas, (and 13 None State Parties) are still affected by cluster munition remnants.

The Convention now has 106 State Parties, and 14 Signatory States, with Namibia, the Gambia and the Philippines ratifying the Convention.

The first of the CCM Article 4 clearance deadlines is only one year away. Out of the 12 affected states parties, only three (Croatia, Afghanistan and Montenegro) are believed to be on track to meet their treaty deadline.

But we are reminded by the latest edition of the Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants report that in many affected countries, **contamination is limited** and the problem could be managed within months or a few years.

We would therefore like to see many more countries join the list of those that are on track to meet their deadlines, as we are moving rapidly towards the end of the Dubrovnik Action Plan.

We have seen the first Article 3 and 4 extension deadline requests this year (Germany, Lao PDR article 4 and Bulgaria article 3). We should consider carefully how extension requests can be avoided.

One problem is that in many of the countries with low or moderate levels of contamination, the extent of the problem is **uncertain**. In order to ensure progress in cluster munition survey and clearance, it is essential to know the **extent of contamination**.

We appeal to all countries who are affected, or suspect that they are affected to conduct a national baseline if they have not already done so.

Norway has always believed in an open dialogue between affected countries, donors and operators at country level to address challenges in survey and clearance. This dialogue should take place both at the **policy** level and, at the **technical** level. The “country coalition” concept introduced during Germany’s presidency of this Convention embodies such an approach.

It is our view that we should use the opportunity at **every** meeting of states parties to this Convention to include, in the margins, country-focused discussions among all relevant stakeholders. This could also provide some new energy into our deliberations.

We hope to see more of these collaborations in the years to come.

Mr President,

Norway remains a consistent partner to mine action and is committed to fulfilling its Article 6 obligation to assist in the implementation of the Convention. We are currently funding humanitarian mine action in 20 countries in direct partnership with global humanitarian NGOs such as Norwegian People’s Aid, Halo Trust and Mines Advisory Group.

As many of you know, Norway holds the Presidency of the Mine Ban Convention this year. We are looking forward to welcoming you all to Oslo in November and to continue fruitful discussions on humanitarian mine- and cluster munition clearance.

Thank you.

