

**Statement delivered by
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Segment on Clearance & Risk Reduction Education*

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Madam President,

Thank you for giving me the floor. I have a brief intervention that concerns the targeting of clearance resources and the importance of monitoring land release statistics in order to promote and to maintain efficiency of operations. This topic supports the advancement of several action points of the circulated draft Dubrovnik Plan under Segment 3 particularly:

Action 3.1 concerning Assessment of the Extent of the Problem and
Action 3.5 concerning the Management of information, decision-making and reporting

The targeting of clearance resources at areas actually contaminated by Cluster Munition Remnants underpins operational effectiveness. It relies on quality survey work, continued improvements of approaches, good management of data and well planned operations. In addition, careful monitoring of survey and clearance statistics over time provides a gauge for donors, national authorities and the management of operators to establish confidence that deployed resources remain on target.

This is particularly relevant in States that have seen the widespread use of cluster munitions where well targeted operations are reflected in survey and clearance statistics concerning:

1. Regularity of submunitions found during operations and the
2. Size of the footprint or Confirmed Hazardous Area (CHA) defined during survey activities and subsequently cleared.

It is reassuring to see, for example, progress which embodies land release principles in Lao PDR – supported by the National Regulatory Authority – where there have been considerable advances in improving the rate of targeted operations.

Evidence based survey has been central to this – where some operators have seen trends in clearance statistics improve tenfold. In a handful of years operations have moved from statistics showing one submunition found for every few thousand square meters searched, to one for every few hundred square meters searched.

The second indicator relating to the size of recorded Confirmed Hazardous Areas also gives cause for optimism .. as the average dimensions of CHA generated through technical survey – have significantly decreased. One operator reports that over a period of 3-4 years a reduction from about 7.5 hectares to about 3.5 hectares has occurred.... implying tighter and more focused practices on the ground.

The monitoring of such statistics in all programmes is vital to ensure that the steering of operations is maintained to keep resources on target to support obligations under Article 4.

I thank you for your attention.