



**Statement on cooperation and assistance by Khaled Yamout, Cluster Munition Coalition
Global Conference on the Convention on Cluster Munitions
Santiago, Chile, 9 June 2010**

Initially CMC would like to express its satisfaction with and strong support to the draft paper on Cooperation and Assistance prepared by South Africa. It is a comprehensive document, taking into account all the essential elements of this important Article 6. The activities proposed for the Action Plan are comprehensive and specific and if they are all implemented we would be on the right track.

Civil society's cooperation with states, both parties to the CCM and other states, as well as with other actors takes a number of forms and shapes. Civil society is dependent on the support obtained from states and other actors in order to fulfill our missions. Financial, in-kind, and technical support are being provided by many states and actors to civil society and for that we are truly appreciative. Continuous and sufficient support from capable states and actors is a prerequisite for the successful implementation of the CCM. Representing a civil society organization operating in South Lebanon, I can tell you all how frustrating it is to witness the devastating impact cluster munitions has had on the daily lives of innocent civilians. Men, women, and children are deprived from leading normal lives simply because a tiny cluster bomb is waiting just around the corner to claim their lives and limbs. And, due to drastically diminishing funds, soon we will not be able to achieve anything that may restore normalcy back to their lives. This is the case in many other countries and because of that, every state or actor capable of providing or obtaining any form of support, should not hesitate for any reason to do so.

In addition to service provision, civil society can contribute immensely to resolve these problems. Being on the front-line of the humanitarian problem, we see the impact of these weapons on human lives and know the challenges and opportunities of resolving these problems. Such a position provides us with important information and expertise that both donor countries and affected states can profoundly benefit from. Civil society can provide expertise, capacities, and practical and efficient solutions to the affected governments in areas such as survey and clearance, victim assistance, stockpile destruction, data management and reporting. Some organizations reached alternative and cost-efficient solutions to stockpile destruction and this expertise has already successfully helped one country destroy its stockpiles. Civil society can also effectively act as a bridge between donors and affected states and among affected states themselves to help bring all forms of resources and expertise together. Having said that, CMC and the civil society organizations under it are ready and will work diligently to provide states and other actors with whatever is needed to fulfill the obligations under the CCM.

Promoting the signature and ratification of the convention is very important, yet with this comes many responsibilities and obligations that many states lack the capacities to fulfill. From here comes the importance of Article 6 which serves as the tool for fulfilling these obligations. With a clear and strong cooperation between donors, affected states, and civil society we would be able to strategically solve the problem throughout the timeframe set by the convention.

I want to reiterate the key CMC messages on International Cooperation and Assistance, as presented in our recent policy papers:

1. *All States Parties are "in a position to do so"* – Assistance is not only a question of financial resources from traditional donors; affected countries have a leadership role to play in sharing good practices, skills, expertise and experience, with south-south cooperation key to successful results.

2. *We need to see results* – New commitments of funding are also needed; showing results in terms of funding, technical assistance and other new projects are essential to implementation and will in addition promote universalization of the convention.
3. *This can be done* – Globally, the existing cluster munition problem is relatively limited in scope and can be addressed in a short period of time. However, for a small number of heavily affected countries like Lao PDR where it will take longer, a substantial increase in funds would bring impressive results on the ground within a decade.

On a final note, I am sure that NOT a single person in this room would hesitate for one second to assist a fellow human being in need. So let us project this on a wider context and place our hands together to alleviate the agony of those in need and prevent any suffering of our future generations.

Thank you.