



CENTRE FOR SECURITY COOPERATION

Oslo Convention – Workshop on Cluster Munitions

23-26 May 2011

Co-organized with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Croatia

Introduction

Pursuant to RACVIAC Programme for 2011, the Cooperative Security Environment Pillar organized and executed the “Oslo Convention - Workshop on Cluster Munitions” in the period of 23-26 May 2011, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Croatia.

This was the third activity related to Cluster Munitions organized by RACVIAC and its partners. The Workshop proved to have excellent timing, being held between the 1st and 2nd Meetings of the States Parties to the Convention, in a period when the implementation of the Convention is in the most intensive phase.

The purpose of this Workshop was to share the latest developments related to the implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM). Objectives included the following:

- To provide an overview for the participants about the provisions of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, particularly the obligations of the States Parties;
- To inform the participants about the results of the first meeting of States Parties held in Vientiane, Lao PDR, from 9 to 12 November 2010;

- To provide a forum for discussion on implementation of the Convention in South Eastern Europe with focus on national strategies, plans for implementation, progress reports, possible international and regional cooperation and needs for support from outside the region.

The Workshop comprised presentations, panel discussion and group work.

Participation



Group Photo

Altogether 37 participants attended the Workshop representing 21 countries or organizations including Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Lao PDR, Moldova, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Serbia, Anti Personnel Mine Ban Convention Implementation Support Unit (ISU) – Geneva, Assistance Advocacy Access – Serbia, Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), Landmine Survivors Initiatives – Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mine Action Centres of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BHMAC), Croatia (CROMAC) and Serbia (SERMAC), Mine Aid - Croatia, OSCE Mission – Tajikistan, Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), Rehabilitation Centre for Stress and Trauma – Croatia, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) – Croatia, United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS).

* Turkey recognizes the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

Overview of the Workshop

For the Workshop opening ceremony Ambassador Mario Nobile, PhD, State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Croatia, Brigadier General Zdravko Jakop, Head of Arms Control/Disarmament Department, Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Croatia, Ms Louisa Vinton, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Croatia and Ambassador Beverly Mercer, Ambassador of Australia to the Republic of Croatia joined us and delivered opening speeches.



Opening Session

The Workshop was divided into 4 main segments followed by group work. The 1st segment focused on the general background and importance of the Convention and its impact on the ground. Mr Christopher Clark (UNMAS) presented a solid picture of the cluster munitions used in different countries, their consequences, key problems regarding their clearance and the harm they cause to civilian population. Ms Anesa Kundurović (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina) informed the audience about the draft Protocol VI on Cluster Munitions to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). She pointed out a contradiction in the new protocol, which would limit users and producers, but may legitimize certain types of cluster munitions. Mr Jörg-Alexander Albrecht (Federal Foreign Office of Germany) gave an overview of the

obligations of the States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

In the 2nd segment, representatives of international organizations shared their experience in international assistance and cooperation. It included presentations of Mr Michael Creighton (GICHD) on cluster munitions survey and clearance operations, Mr Hans Risser (UNDP) on the role and position of the UNDP in the implementation of the CCM, Mr Sorin Sterie (RCC) on the role of the RCC in the SEE region, Mr Michael Storey (OSCE Office in Tajikistan) on the OSCE efforts in an other region.

The 3rd segment started with the briefing of Mr Visasacksith Snookphone (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lao PDR) who informed the participants about shocking facts on the cluster munitions and UXO challenge in Laos and introduced the results of the 1st Meeting of the States Parties to the CCM. His presentation was followed by a panel discussion on the Vientiane Action Plan and Vientiane Declaration, NGO perspective of the 1st Meeting of the States Parties, national perspectives, universalization of the CCM in SEE and a photo presentation of cluster munitions strike area in Laos. The panel of speakers included representatives of the SEE region countries and organizations who participated in the meeting in Vientiane.

The 4th segment focused on the implementation of the CCM and sharing national perspectives and experience. Mine Action Centres (BHMIC, CROMAC, SERMAC) described the current situation of contamination with cluster munitions in their countries and the role of the mine action centres.

The victim assistance was reviewed from both international and national perspectives. Mr Kerry Brinkert (ISU) shared lessons learned from the Ottawa Convention for the CCM, Mr Hrvoje Debac (MFAEI – Croatia) the frameworks, policies and implementation mechanisms of victim assistance in Croatia. Also, Mr Ramiz Becirovic (Landmine Survivor Initiative –

Bosnia and Herzegovina) briefed on the challenges and positive practices in provisions of victim assistance in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Ms Zdenka Pantic (International Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims) described the psychological aspects of injuries from cluster munitions.

The last part of this segment included briefings of experts from Moldova, Hungary, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* and Montenegro about the stockpile and destruction of cluster munitions in their countries. SSgt Ed Batlak (MoD Croatia) provided an insight into the national reporting process besides the stockpile reduction.



Demonstration of the Destruction of Cluster Munitions in Hungary

Finally, participants were divided into two working groups according to their professional preferences: victim assistance and education; stockpile destruction, clearance and international assistance. Both working group groups provided a short summary of their work.

Summary/Recommendations

The event successfully covered the issues related to the implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions and gave an opportunity for frank and open discussions between the representatives of the countries of the SEE region, the

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international organizations supporting the efforts of implementation and the NGOs involved.

Countries have already made significant steps and achieved results in eliminating the danger caused by the cluster munitions, however the presentations clearly showed that countries of the SEE region still have a serious contamination with cluster munitions. Therefore, clearing and destruction of stockpiles remain important and urgent tasks.

Also, there are more actions required related to cluster munitions identified in Vientiane in the fields of partnership, universalization, victim assistance, international cooperation and assistance, exchange of information, etc.

According to the participants` assessments provided at the end of the event, the Workshop proved to be successful and well organized. All participants considered the Workshop valuable for their future work and beneficial to the security in the region. Participants also agreed on the necessity of conducting similar kind of workshops in the future.

The cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Croatia was excellent. In particular, their contribution in the preparation of agenda and invitation of experts was certainly the most important factor in the success of the Workshop.

The implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions requires long lasting, significant efforts. Goals can be achieved easier in cooperation and using the lessons learned of others. Therefore, RACVIAC stands ready to continue the series of Workshops on cluster munitions in 2012 serving as a platform for discussions and initiation point of cooperation.

Compiled by: Lieutenant Colonel Zoltan Volgyi, HU, Activity Coordinator,
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