

## Statement by Ambassador Stefano Toscano, Director of GICHD

### 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties of the Convention on Cluster Munitions Palais des Nations, Geneva, Room XIX

Mr. President,

The GICHD had the opportunity to take part in the meeting held in Bangkok in March earlier this year, referred to by the European Union, and we can testify to the significant interest raised by the country coalition approach owing to its potential to foster both implementation and universalization of the Convention.

A country coalition approach facilitates efforts of national authorities towards in-country implementation of the CCM and towards mobilizing and managing international support. It also facilitates alignment with national priorities as well as coordinated and sustainable action.

As referred to in the excellent document submitted by the Presidency, the starting point for a meaningful and successful country coalition should be a national strategy, designed through a participative, multi-stakeholder process led by the national authorities. A national strategy spells out what success means and how to get there, generating a shared understanding among all stakeholders and thereby setting the stage for coherent and coordinated efforts.

Coalescing around a national strategy, in our view, help turn the principles of good donorship into reality, including the importance of national leadership & ownership, donor coordination and multi-year support.

While the concept of country coalition is new, the very idea underpinning it has been tested and implemented in the recent past in both Colombia and Afghanistan. The GICHD was privileged to be involved in both these efforts, and continues its engagement in both countries.

For example, earlier this year we supported the organization of the Afghanistan Donor and Implementing Partners Coordination Workshop for Mine Action. This workshop facilitated the strengthening of effective partnerships between actors on the ground and the donor community supporting mine action. It has been followed up by meetings in Kabul – attended by donors and operators as well – dedicated to enhancing the efficiency of clearance operations.

Both the Colombian and Afghan initiatives could provide useful insights as it comes to concretizing the country coalition approach.

Mr. President

The country coalition concept is mirrored by a similar approach currently developed in the context of the Antipersonnel Mine Ban Convention, the so-called individualized approach. We believe it advantageous to ensure that the two approaches “compare notes” – if you allow me the expression –, and benefit from their respective experiences.

Thank you.