

**Cluster Munition Coalition Statement – General Exchange of Views
Convention on Cluster Munitions 4th Meeting of the States Parties
Lusaka, 11 September 2013**



Thank you Mr. President.

The Cluster Munition Coalition would like to begin by thanking Zambia for preparing and hosting this meeting; we would also like to thank Norway for its dedication and diligence in fulfilling the role of President this year.

The Cluster Munition Coalition is pleased to see such a good turnout in Lusaka this week by States Parties and signatories, as well as by so many non-signatories.

The Cluster Munition Coalition welcomes the states that have ratified since we last met for the Third Meeting of States Parties in Oslo (Peru, Australia, Nauru, Liechtenstein, Chad, Bolivia, and Iraq, which is particularly notable given the history of use in the country). We urge all the remaining signatories to ratify without delay. We also welcome Andorra, which acceded in April, becoming the 81st State Party to the Convention.

One-hundred and twelve states are now part of this Convention and with every new State Party, the emerging global norm rejecting these weapons is strengthened. Universalisation of the treaty is the highest priority of the Cluster Munition Coalition. We believe that every country in the world can join and should join this convention; it is a question of prioritizing the protection of civilians during and after conflict. We continue to call on all countries to renounce this weapon by joining the convention, especially those that have stockpiled or used them in the past.

Last week we released our annual Cluster Munition Monitor report, which shows how this treaty is working to save lives across the world. The report found that governments are virtually racing to finish their stockpile destruction obligation, and are moving forward at a solid pace to clear their land and to assist cluster munition victims.

According to *Cluster Munition Monitor 2013*, states have shown impressive progress on stockpile destruction so far. Of the 33 States Parties that have stockpiled cluster munitions at some point in time, 15 have already destroyed their stockpiles and the other 18 are preparing to begin, or are in the process of, destroying them. [If Chile speaks before CMC and announces destruction then welcome it here]

A total of 22 States Parties have destroyed more than one million cluster munitions and 122 million submunitions as of July 2013. This represents the destruction of 71% of cluster munitions and 69% of submunitions declared as stockpiled by States Parties. We are pleased to see most other states with stockpiles are planning for early destruction, with several more states expected to finish in the next couple of years. But we still need to see destruction plans from several states, and we urge those states with any need for international cooperation and assistance to express them clearly.

On clearance, in 2012, almost 60,000 unexploded submunitions were destroyed during clearance of almost 78 square kilometers of land across 11 states and two other areas, a

significant increase from 2011. We urge all states to act quickly to clear their land of cluster munitions, taking advantage of the latest evidence-based methodologies to establish where cluster munition contaminated areas really are. Clearance can be done within the 10-year deadline by almost all States Parties if they follow these more efficient procedures.

The Convention on Cluster Munitions has set the highest standards for victim assistance in international humanitarian law. With Iraq's ratification the majority of cluster munition survivors now live in States Parties to the convention - which are legally obliged to ensure that these victims are provided with assistance. According to *Cluster Munition Monitor 2013*, all States Parties with cluster munition victims provided some victim assistance services and nearly all States Parties have acted in accordance with the convention's victim assistance plan. We urge all states with victims to take further steps to ensure required services are available and accessible to *all* victims, including those living in remote areas.

For the States Parties implementing these essential Convention obligations, assistance is available if needed. All States Parties in a position to do so must provide the financial, technical and material support that will allow other States Parties to implement the Convention, and we call on them to fulfill this requirement in whatever way they can. Again, assistance is not just about funding, but can simply be one affected country sharing lessons learned with another. At the same time, we call on affected states to clearly identify their work plans and assistance requirements to enable others to support them quickly and effectively.

In contrast to the generally positive news coming from the Monitor, the CMC continues to be deeply concerned by the extensive use of cluster munitions by Syrian government forces in 2012 and 2013, causing numerous civilian casualties. In addition, there is a growing concern for the potential scale of post-conflict casualties as this notoriously unreliable weapon leaves a trail of unexploded submunitions in its wake.

Any user of cluster munitions is knowingly putting civilians' lives at risk, and we strongly condemn their acts.

More than 110 states have already condemned Syria's cluster munition use, including dozens of states outside the convention. We call on all states to condemn this use and commend those that have already done so.

The reaction to Syria's use of cluster munitions, as well as the few other cases of known or alleged use in recent years, is testament to the powerful stigma that has been created against the use of cluster munitions. States will face international condemnation for use of these weapons whether or not they are part of the Convention. Indeed, every incident of use in recent years has received quick and widespread condemnation, some even from states not parties. As well, most of the known or alleged users of these weapons have denied use, showing the shame associated with using these discredited weapons, even among states not party to the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

While significant progress is being made under the Convention on Cluster Munitions, challenges remain. Seventeen States Parties still have not delivered their initial transparency report as required by Article 7 of the Convention, and a similar number are late in submitting their annual updated reports for 2013. Only 22 States Parties have enacted

national implementation legislation to enforce the Convention's provisions, an essential step for ensuring the Convention's rules are binding at the national level. We strongly encourage all States Parties to ensure the ban on assistance with the use, production, transfer, and stockpiling of cluster munitions is clearly reflected in such laws, including in times of joint operations with states not parties, and to otherwise make known their views on interpretive issues to other States Parties.

In short, we can see the Convention is already having a great impact and that States Parties are taking their obligations seriously. But we need all States Parties' continued dedication and commitment for the Convention to continue down its successful path.

In closing, Mr President I would like to reaffirm that the CMC stands ready, as always, to continue to work in partnership with you all to protect civilians from the unacceptable harm caused by these horrific weapons.

Thank you.