



**Sixth Meeting of States Parties (6MSP) to the Convention on
Cluster Munitions (CCM)
Geneva, 5 – 7 September 2016**

**STATEMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
ON COMPLIANCE ISSUES**

Thank you Mr./Ms. Coordinator.

The experience with the Convention on Cluster Munitions, as well as with other treaties banning specific types of weapons, is that compliance truly makes a difference. Only through full compliance with the provisions of the Convention we can achieve its humanitarian objectives. It has been said that this Convention is still in its early years, but that certainly does not mean that we should lose focus from completing obligations as soon as possible, complying with them in a swift and determined manner. During this week, States Parties have demonstrated a number of positive examples of how they are moving forward at a good pace. It is our imperative to maintain this focus and accelerate progress on all provisions of the Convention.

Mr./Ms. Coordinator,

Croatia is concerned about any allegations of use of cluster munitions. We strongly support the universal prohibition of cluster munitions and condemn all use of cluster munitions. It is important for us that all these concerns are addressed timely, in coordinated and systematic way, and that States Parties do not hesitate to raise questions when serious allegations arise, otherwise we are risking undermining the very credibility and effectiveness of this Convention. This must not be seen as some kind of “finger-pointing”; rather, these concerns should be addressed in the spirit of cooperative compliance by determining the facts objectively, thus leading to resolution in a cooperative manner of whatever compliance issue has arisen.

It is for this reason that we are deeply disturbed by the information from the Cluster Munition Monitor Report 2015 that cluster munitions have been used in five non-signatories to the Convention since September 2014 – Libya, Syria, Sudan, Ukraine and Yemen. We repeat our call to all States concerned to fully investigate these allegations and clarify these matters in a transparent way and to do their utmost to ensure that cluster munitions are never used again.

Croatia remains especially concerned with the influx of new reports about continued and increased use of cluster munitions in Syria in recent months. Even though documented reports on the use of cluster munitions date back to the beginning of this conflict in 2012, from the reports on the ground it is obvious that the use of these banned weapons received a new impetus after the Russian Federation had actively engaged in the conflict in September 2015. In its latest report, Human Rights Watch (HRW) confirms earlier evidence that the Syrian-Russian joint military operation in Syria has extensively used internationally banned cluster munitions. This particularly applies to the renewed joint air operations during the period May – July 2016, which include documented data on tens of attacks with cluster bombs that have caused dozens of civilian casualties in opposition-held areas.

We therefore strongly condemn the newest widespread use of cluster munitions by Russian and Syrian forces and we call upon both countries to cease this practice immediately, join the Convention on Cluster Munitions and renounce these inhumane weapons.

Mr./Ms. Coordinator,

The whole world has witnessed the horrible and long-lasting effects of cluster munitions' use that had taken place decades ago in Lao PDR and elsewhere; it is our duty as humanity to make sure now that this same fate will not befall Syrian people in years and decades to come.

Finally, we would again like to thank the civil society, HRW/CMC in particular, for serving as our common conscience and for providing relevant facts.

Thank you.