



Statement by South Africa to the Seventh Meeting of States Parties of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (4-6 September 2017)

[Check against delivery]

Mr President

As this is the first time that my delegation takes the floor, allow me to congratulate you on your appointment as President of the Seventh Meeting of States Parties (7MSP) to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM). My delegation wishes to assure you of its full support and cooperation.

Mr President

February 23rd 2017 marked the 10th anniversary of the Oslo Process. Ten years ago the Oslo Process began when 46 states took a significant step by making an historic declaration to outlaw cluster munitions at a conference hosted by the Norwegian government.

South Africa has been a long standing supporter of the CCM which in part is informed by our commitment to multilateralism and a rules based international order but also motivated by our conviction that the use of these weapons in conflicts have shown them to cause unacceptable and lingering harm to civilian populations

Since its entry into force, the CCM has made important progress most notably through increasing adherence to the Convention; reinforcing the norms being established by the Convention and; completing operative obligations by States Parties. Notwithstanding the progress that has been achieved we believe that we must remain steadfast in our efforts to bring additional states within the Convention, and in particular those states either affected by cluster munitions or which retain them.

Mr President

The Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) was signed by South Africa in 2008 and was tabled for ratification by our Parliament in January 2014. In terms of the ratification requirements, South Africa is required to destroy its stockpile of prohibited cluster munitions within an eight year time frame. Phase 1 entails that all prohibited cluster munitions are taken out of commission and ring fenced for planned disposal. To this end Phase 1 was successfully completed in 2015.

The disposal of cluster munitions by the South African Department of Defence commenced in 2016 and the cluster munitions earmarked for disposal were integrated into the General Munitions Disposal programme.

Mr President

At this the 7th Anniversary of the Convention's entry into force my delegation reaffirms its commitment to fully implement all the provisions of this worthy Convention. South Africa will continue to play an active role, in partnership with States and members of civil society, towards the achievement of a cluster munitions free world. Thank you