



## MINUTES OF THE CCM COORDINATION COMMITTEE VIRTUAL MEETING

Held on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2020

from 14:00 to 15:00 hours

### 1. Present:

#### Switzerland – 2RC President

H.E. Mr. Félix Baumann

Ms. Aline Berdoz

Mr. Maxime Weber

#### United Kingdom – 10MSP President-Designate

H.E. Mr. Aidan Liddle

#### Sri Lanka – Immediate past President (9MSP)

Ms. Udani Gunawardene

#### Afghanistan

Mr. Abdul Ahad Shirzad

#### Australia

Mr. Diwaka Prakash

#### Iraq

Mr. Mohammed Ridha Al-Haidari

#### Austria

H.E. Mr. Robert Müller

Mr. Adolf Brückler

Ms. Gamze Subasi

#### Chile

Ms. Pamela Moraga

#### Mexico

Mr. Alonso Martínez

#### Montenegro

Mr. Nikola Ražnatović

#### Namibia

Mr. Colin Namalambo

#### Netherlands

Mr. Reint Vogelaar

#### New Zealand

Ms. Charlotte Skerten

#### Philippines

H.E. Ms. Maria Teresa Almojuela

Mr. Jonelle John Domingo

#### Spain

Mr. Juan Manglano

#### Sweden

Ms. Kajsa Aulin

#### Zambia

Ms. Chileshe Nkole

#### CMC

Ms. Kasia Derlicka-Rosenbauer

#### ICRC

Ms. Wen Zhou

#### UNODA

Ms. Silvia Mercogliano

Ms. Erika Kawahara

#### Implementation Support Unit

Ms. Sheila N. Mweemba

Mr. Emad Al-Juhaishi

Ms. Elaine Weiss

## 2. **Opening remarks by the President**

President of the Second Review Conference of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (2RC), Ambassador Félix Baumann, opened the eighth Coordination Committee Meeting under the Swiss Presidency with a warm welcome and thanked the Committee members for attending the Meeting.

## 3. **Approval of the Minutes of the previous Coordination Committee Meeting**

The Committee approved, without correction, the Minutes of the Virtual Coordination Committee Meeting held on Thursday, 17 September 2020, as an accurate reflection of what had transpired during that Meeting.

## 4. **Discussion on the modalities of hosting the 2<sup>nd</sup> Review Conference in light of the escalation of the health situation in Switzerland and following the new announcements that were made by the Swiss Federal Council on Wednesday, 28 October 2020**

Ambassador Baumann informed that since meetings with more than 50 participants were no longer permitted under the new Federal restrictions that came into effect on 29 October 2020, the 2RC would not be held as planned, that is, as a hybrid meeting in Lausanne on 23-27 November 2020. He outlined the two probable options on holding the 2RC, the first being to postpone the Conference, and the second to organize it as an entirely virtual meeting. He affirmed that the Swiss Presidency was dedicated to overcoming the obstacles faced in hosting the Review Conference to the best of its ability. Furthermore, Switzerland was eager to uphold multilateralism and demonstrate the effectiveness of the system of collective responsibility. The President also expressed his commitment to ensure the continuity of the work of the Convention.

Ambassador Baumann asserted that the option of postponing the 2RC was a risky one as it was impossible to predict how the situation of the pandemic would evolve. Additionally, he pointed out that the schedule of meetings the following year was already extremely busy, which would make it difficult to find a slot for the Conference. The President hence suggested that the 2RC to be held as a completely virtual meeting on the agreed upon dates. He acknowledged that it was, however, not an ideal solution as it would make it difficult for States Parties and other stakeholders to participate fully and that it also lacked the visibility to enhance the momentum of the Convention. Furthermore, a virtual meeting posed a notable challenge in the process leading to the approval of documents.

The President informed that if the 2RC were to be held virtually, there would still only be 4 formal meeting days. Each session would also be reduced to 2 hours due to the constraints associated with the virtual system. Nevertheless, multilingualism would be supported as *Interprefy* could accommodate simultaneous interpretation into all 6 UN official languages. He advised that there were still many open questions regarding the organization of the 2RC as the Presidency had only had two days to deliberate on this matter and planned to hold more consultations the following week. He informed that technical support for the virtual 2RC would be provided by the UNOG Division of Conference Management (DCM) and as such he would consult with UNODA on the DCM's availability in order to determine the actual days of the formal meeting. Moreover, he notified that he and his

team would be physically present at the Palais des Nations during the entire duration of the Conference.

Ambassador Baumann assured that he would consult with the broader CCM community on how to move forward with the 2RC. He indicated that the decision to be taken would not have financial implications that exceeded the budget of the Conference in Lausanne. He reminded the meeting that a lot of work had gone into the substantial documents since June 2020 and informed that he would engage in further discussions during the following 3 weeks to overcome as many obstacles as possible in convening the 2RC. He restated his preference in moving ahead with the Conference and not disrupting the established cycle of the Convention. He highlighted that such an interruption would also adversely affect the office of the succeeding Presidency. The President then opened the floor for comments and suggestions.

In the ensuing discussion, several issues were raised and discussed, including the following:

- a. There was broad consensus with the President on the difficulties of postponing the 2RC and acknowledgement that holding a fully virtual Review Conference was potentially a viable solution, albeit far from ideal.
- b. A virtual Conference would pose challenges in ensuring equal and meaningful participation of all stakeholders due to technical problems and time zone differences, which would particularly affect Member States of the African Group and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).
- c. The rules of procedure needed to be upheld and interpreted carefully when making decisions in the organization of the 2RC.
- d. Documents adopted and decisions made at the Review Conference needed to follow careful procedure and given due consideration, as they would be binding for at least the following 5 years.
- e. In planning the programme of work of a virtual meeting, priority should be given to general decisions that are fundamental to the operation of the Convention in the following 5 years, while major decisions could be taken at a later stage.
- f. Major and potentially controversial decisions, such as changes to the CCM machinery, required a more formal and drawn-out process, such as taking written statements into consideration or holding in-person consultations.
- g. Silence procedures could be utilized to ensure States Parties were consulted in the decision-making process.
- h. As President-Designate of the 10MSP, the United Kingdom offered the days allocated for the 10MSP in September 2021 for the 2RC to be held, should its postponement be inevitable.

A number of Committee members expressed their regret that the 2RC would not take place as planned in Lausanne. They acknowledged the months of hard work invested by the President and his team in preparing for the 2RC as well as the challenges they were facing in organizing an unconventional

Review Conference. The Coordination Committee conveyed their willingness to support the President’s decision, whatever it may be to preserve the integrity of the Convention, and committed to consult with their governments in capital to come up with solutions that would overcome the possible hurdles ahead.

Ambassador Baumann thanked the Coordination Committee for its valuable comments and for the support it had shown to the Presidency. He expressed his pleasure in working with the Committee members and appreciated the prevailing collegial atmosphere. He, thereafter, gave a brief recap of the various issues raised during the meeting. He reassured the Meeting that the Presidency would perform the necessary follow up with a number of States Parties on how to address the challenges faced given the complexity of the situation. He outlined that he would come back to the Coordination Committee or correspond directly with all States Parties on how to proceed. The President concluded the Coordination Committee Meeting by encouraging everyone to remain positive in spite of the turbulent and unpredictable times caused by the pandemic.

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