

# **ACCRA REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE UNIVERSALIZATION OF THE CONVENTION ON CLUSTER MUNITIONS**

**Presentation by Lebanon on the “Status of the CCM”  
28 May 2012**

**Excellencies, colleagues and friends,**

**If I may at the outset express my heartfelt appreciation to the Governments of Ghana, Togo and Zambia for organizing this important event, as well as to present my sincere gratitude to our Ghanaian hosts and the UNDP for making our stay in this beautiful country a pleasant one, while not forget to pay tribute to Norway for their continued support to this process.**

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

**It is almost 2 years since our convention has entered into force with 11 countries on board, out of which 71 are States parties; albeit in itself a very positive development, but unfortunately one cannot say the World is a safer place, with hundreds of millions of submunitions stockpiled and civilians continue to bear the brunt of wars and conflicts, some passing away, and others and their families and communities living in agony and despair.**

**The world has been trapped for long decades in the economic and social burden of armed violence and the security burden of underdevelopment. Whilst, violence seems to remain the unavoidable tragic product of underdevelopment, the vicious circle makes the opposite true also.**

**The former United Nations Secretary-general, the Ghanaian Kofi Annan, stated in his report “In larger Freedom” and I quote “we will not enjoy development without security, we will not enjoy security without development, and we will not enjoy either without respect for human rights” end quote.**

**There emerges the significance of our collective initiatives and endeavors, and the CCM is of course the culmination of the collective will and determination of States and other actors, that have jointly envisioned a solution to address the horrendous effects of cluster munitions as eloquently stated by UNSG Mr. Ban Ki Moon, both on human dignity and on development. I must here recall the importance of the partnership as enshrined in the Convention itself and in**

**action no. 1 of the Vientiane Action plan; a partnership between States, high or low income, the UN, international organizations, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the civil society under the umbrella of the Cluster Munition Coalition. This partnership is the highlight of our work, and should be preserved for many good reasons, not least noble is to spare civilians the tragedies of wars.**

**I would like to thank all those States who so clearly subscribe to the humanitarian imperatives of the Convention. This was evident at the Second Meeting of States Parties which you entrusted Lebanon to host and preside over, and which many of you honored us with your attendance, indeed with [131] states present, 18 states from the Arab region.**

**In this regard, I would like to underline the importance of the regional context that can be conducive to our collective efforts under the convention. This conference as well as other regional events, some which have already taken place such as a workshop in Croatia two weeks ago, and another for the Middle East Arab countries anticipated to take place in Lebanon in the lead up to the Third MSP, should be given the proper attention as very important tools in our concerted actions, both with regards to the actual implementation and universalization efforts. Indeed, these events constitute the recognition that regional and national efforts cannot be dissociated in any way from a holistic approach to address the challenges ahead of the convention, as well as in raising awareness and responsiveness around the world to the realities caused by cluster munitions. In the end, it is the difference we can achieve on the ground that makes a difference in the life of people affected.**

**But for our efforts to multiply and for us to have a joint approach and common objective that can reinforce the work of each initiative on the ground, we have this wonderful and very effective community of States parties to the Convention and all our partners, indeed the partnership I referred to earlier. And together we meet annually to review progress and elaborate on how we can make our efforts more efficient and effective.**

**Recently we also met informally, at the 2nd intersessional meeting in Geneva, with the objective of reviewing the status of implementation of the convention and to discuss how States Parties and Friends of this Convention can work to advance its implementation and universalization. It should be noted that the level of participation this year was extremely positive, with a total of 346 delegates in attendance over the course of the week with at least 78 states and**

**25 organizations, which I believe is an accurate demonstration of the collaborative nature that has underpinned the CCM process. With such encouraging numbers at this year's Intersessional Meetings, it is clear to me that this Convention will continue to grow and thrive, and that ultimately this will mean greater protection of lives, limbs and livelihoods in the future.**

**Ladies and gentlemen, why do we as States parties, even more, states affected by cluster munitions such as my own country Lebanon, consider this convention an important one? Obviously, there should be several reasons:**

- 1- Is the comprehensive/categorical ban that this convention entails. During the negotiations on the CCM itself, there were some arguments advocating for good or bad cluster munitions, or those reliable or accurate cluster munitions. All these were refuted by counter arguments from those working in the field/ victims/countries affected and friend and are better informed about the indiscriminate effects and realities of cluster munitions. Eventually, the CCM prohibits all types of cluster munitions known and have been used to date.**
- 2- Prohibiting the use of cluster munitions under the Convention, is complemented by another aspect, that is the stockpile destruction. By this we make sure that current stockpiles are destroyed within strict time frames, and that these will not be used in future conflicts or wars. This is another reflection of the preventive nature of this humanitarian instrument. Since we met in Beirut, 2 States, Slovenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina completed destruction of all their stockpiles, in addition to 8 States having declared that they had done so before the convention entered into force for them. There are another nine states that have declared possession of cluster munitions, out of which 4 have begun the physical destruction of their stockpiles, and all this is extremely promising.**
- 3- The third point relates to clearing areas contaminated by cluster munitions, where progress is also recognized, such as in Croatia, Laos, Lebanon and others. National plans have been developed in many occasions, in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of clearance operations.**
- 4- Victims, their families and communities have the right to receive assistance under the convention. They have been in the heart of this**

**process, and the convention in many ways reflects their voices and their needs in a manner that preserves their dignity, and their unequivocal right to social and economic reintegration.**

- 5- Last but not least is the stigma this convention has managed to create during this short period of its life. Although the number of states parties is still limited, but the CCM has succeeded in creating an international norm that all states will have to respect. Few examples could be cited in this regard, such as the use of cluster munitions in the 2008 war between Russia and Georgia, where both parties to the conflict denied the fact that cluster munitions were used, as well as in the conflict between Thailand and Cambodia, and in Libya, and allegations of use in Sudan.**

**Colleagues and friends, in order to carry forward all these lofty undertakings, the states parties in Beirut, have decided on establishing working groups, each led by one or two coordinators. These working groups are as follows:**

**General status and operation of the Convention; Holy See and Zambia  
Universalization; Japan, Portugal  
Victim assistance; Austria and Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Clearance and risk reduction; Ireland and Lao PDR  
Stockpile destruction and retention; Croatia and Germany  
Cooperation and assistance; Mexico and Spain  
Reporting; Belgium  
National implementation measures; New Zealand**

**In addition to the working groups, it was also decided to establish a coordination committee, under the chairmanship of the presidency, and the membership of the coordinators, UNODA, the ICRC, the CMC and UNDP BCPR under the leadership of Mdm Sekkens that is providing an interim support to the presidency pending the establishment of a secretariat of the convention or an implementation support unit. I must here say that our involvement in this process is something we should all be proud of, but evidently the work must continue as we are still a long way from achieving the ambitious goals we have set for ourselves as States Parties obliged to fulfill the provisions of the CCM and the Vientiane Action Plan.**

**I see that our agenda has also mentioned the participation at the 3 MSP as a subject that I should address now, but I will leave it to Wednesday session on the preparations for the 3 MSP, when I am going to talk about the draft**

**decisions and recommendations that we are working on at the Geneva level, but I would like to stress again, that your presence in Oslo in the third MSP will be a clear demonstration of your adherence to the humanitarian objective of this convention.**

**Before I bring this presentation to an end, I would like to share with you what HE Kwame Nkrumah said long time ago: “Revolutions are brought about by men, by men who think as men of action and act as men of thought”.**

**Let us be as revolutionary as the CCM has been, a groundbreaking convention, that has changed the lives of thousands around the globe.**

**I thank you again, and I remain at your disposal for any clarification or question.**