

Cluster Munition Coalition Statement on Stockpile Destruction  
Convention on Cluster Munitions 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the States Parties  
Oslo, 13 September 2012



Thank you Mr. President.

The destruction of cluster munition stockpiles is prevention in action. It is a clear, irreversible step toward a future with no more use, no more risk of contaminated land, and no new victims.

As you have heard earlier, more than 85 million submunitions have already been destroyed by States Parties. That's 68% of all States Parties' declared stocks of cluster munitions and 60% of their submunitions. This outstanding level of achievement demonstrates how committed governments are to rapidly implementing this convention. It also dispels doubts raised about the destruction of stockpiles being too costly or technically challenging.

A total of 13 States Parties have completed destruction, and all 18 States Parties with remaining stocks have initiated the destruction process and are on schedule to complete the task by their deadlines.

We warmly welcome the news that The Netherlands – which used to hold one of the biggest stocks among States Parties - has just finished destroying its stocks. And we appreciate the updates received today. Such reports help us see the momentum on stockpile destruction is going strong. We also encourage you to share your progress with a wider community, for example by inviting the media and other observers to stockpile destruction events.

On the other hand, we are still waiting to learn from several States Parties about their status under Article 3. Their initial transparency reports, some of which are late, must state clearly whether or not they hold stocks, and if so, provide details on the types and quantities of the stocks, any destruction that has taken place, and destruction plans. And we still know too little about the stockpiles of signatories and other states not party. We strongly encourage them to provide such information either through voluntary transparency reports or at convention meetings.

In the *Vientiane Action Plan*, States Parties committed to have a plan in place for stockpile destruction within one year of entry into force, including a timeline and budget, and to begin physical destruction as soon as possible. We just heard the following states announce their timeline, and many of them intend to be done well in advance of their deadline: Denmark, Germany, FYR Macedonia, and the UK. We very much look forward to hearing from the following states when they expect to complete the task: Bulgaria, Chile, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and Switzerland. In addition, both Bosnia and Herzegovina and Spain, which had declared completion of stockpile destruction, have since reported discovering additional stockpiles of cluster munitions requiring destruction. We encourage rapid destruction of these stocks.

We believe that all states that have joined the convention thus far should be able to complete stockpile destruction well in advance of their deadline, and that no state should need to request an extension. This is why we are so pleased to see most States Parties undertaking destruction at an

early stage – many even before ratifying. On the other hand, we discourage states from planning to use the entire eight-year period, as unexpected delays could cause them to miss their deadline.

Some states have expressed concern about the cost of destroying their stockpiles. However, as is well known, the Convention does not create new costs since cluster munitions have a shelf-life expiry date after which they must be destroyed in any case, and in some instances destruction can be cheaper than long-term storage. The cost of stockpile destruction depends on the types and quantities of munitions to be destroyed, on the technology chosen, and on considerations such as transportation, security and labor costs. There is already a solid body of knowledge and practical experience to draw from, with technical assistance available from States Parties, UN agencies, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations. For many states, in particular those with small stockpiles, it is possible to put in place low-cost and low-tech solutions. We are ready to help you do so.

We would also like to emphasize that proper implementation of Article 3 requires that all stocks under a state's jurisdiction and control be identified and destroyed before completion is declared, including stocks remaining at former production facilities or elsewhere than the armed forces' arsenal. Help is also available to identify cluster munitions, including through the identification tool created by the GICHD and by technical experts in NGOs, the UN and other states.

Again, we are strongly encouraged by the work already being done to destroy cluster munitions quickly and efficiently. Your acts are contributing to a safer world and showing the world that we can get rid of cluster munitions once and for all.

Thank you.