

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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MESSAGE TO THE THIRD MEETING OF STATES PARTIES
TO THE CONVENTION ON CLUSTER MUNITIONS

Oslo, 11-14 September 2012

*Delivered by Ms. Angela Kane,
High Representative for Disarmament Affairs*

I am delighted to greet all participants to this meeting. I wish to extend my heartfelt gratitude and admiration to the Government and people of Norway for initiating the “Oslo process”, which resulted in the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

I commend the determination of the members of the broad-based coalition of States, international organizations and civil society which brought about this international standard in a remarkably short time and are now translating it into action on the ground. This Convention has significantly reinforced the body of International Humanitarian Law, thus enhancing the protection of civilians, promoting the rights of cluster munition victims, and improving the development prospects of affected communities. The CCM is an essential element of a growing recognition of the paramount importance of the protection of civilians and the need to ensure this through weapons-specific prohibitions

You proclaimed cluster munitions to cause unacceptable harm and incompatible with humanitarian standards. It is intolerable that we still witness cases of new use of these weapons. We must all condemn this! Cluster munitions have unequivocally proven to be unreliable and inaccurate. They indiscriminately kill and maim civilians, both at the time of use and after conflicts have ended. Their wide area effect and high propensity to leave behind unexploded submunitions present a fundamental challenge to the requirement in international humanitarian law that civilians be protected against the effects of hostilities, in particular, the rules on distinction and proportionality. As witnessed in many countries, cluster munition remnants are a formidable obstacle for post-conflict recovery, return of refugees, the rebuilding of livelihoods for survivors and affected communities. [The situation in conflict-prone parts of the world this year has underlined that the use of explosive weapons in populated areas needs further urgent attention. I urge all states to, in particular, end the use of explosive weapons with wide area effects in densely populated areas and I hope that this community will take forward specific discussions on this issue in year ahead.](#)

The universalization, strict compliance and implementation of the Convention will not only further stigmatize this weapon, but will also effectively eradicate its use, development and transfer. I commend the [75] States that have ratified the Convention on Cluster Munitions so far, and call upon all States to ratify or accede to it as a matter of urgency.

I wish you success in your deliberations on the progress and challenges in the implementation of the far-reaching Vientiane Action Plan and on ways to further strengthen the treaty’s implementation architecture. The CCM is the vehicle to address the horrendous effects of these

weapons and put an end to the suffering they inflict. Let's take this opportunity to prevent their proliferation and future use.

I wish to reiterate the United Nations firm commitment and support for a world free of cluster munitions.

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