



Slovensko predsedstvo EU 2008  
Slovenian Presidency of the EU 2008  
La Présidence slovène de l'UE 2008

## **EU PRESIDENCY OPENING STATEMENT Dublin Diplomatic Conference on Cluster Munitions (19 - 30 May 2008)**

Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak as Presidency of the European Union.

1. Let me first of all, express our utmost gratitude to the government of Ireland for hosting this Diplomatic Conference to negotiate a Convention on Cluster Munitions that cause unacceptable harm to civilians, which has been under discussion for a year. This Conference represents a crucial step in the process which began in Oslo in February 2007 and continued in Lima in May 2007, in Vienna in December 2007 and in Wellington in February 2008. All the EU Member States participated in the European regional conference which was held in Brussels in October in 2007. We are confident that this Diplomatic Conference will enable us to achieve our shared objective to conclude a legally binding instrument that prohibits the use, production, transfer and stock-piling of cluster munitions that cause unacceptable harm to civilians, and which would also include provisions on cooperation and assistance.
2. During the two weeks ahead of us, European Union Member States are prepared to work intensively and constructively in order to solve the issues on which consensus has not been reached so far. We call on all delegations to demonstrate their willingness to agree on an ambitious, effective and realistic instrument, bringing together as many States as possible – affected States as well as producers and users – in order for this instrument to achieve its humanitarian goal and to make a real difference on the ground.
3. The EU is aware that intensive work is still required to secure an agreement on some difficult issues. We are pleased to note that the proposals contained in the compendium prepared during the Wellington conference have become official documents of the Diplomatic Conference. These proposals present a number of options, which should be seriously explored in order to identify elements that can offer solutions on the pending issues.
4. The EU welcomes the organisation of work that you have proposed. Much progress can be achieved by an informal framework before it is adopted by plenary meetings. The EU urges the Chair to make every effort to achieve consensus, as this will determine the level of support that the new Convention will eventually enjoy.

5. The EU continues to consider that parallel efforts should also be pursued in the CCW, which is supported by all EU Member States, as well as by some major stakeholders, not currently involved in the Oslo Process. The European Union is taking an active part in this process and will continue to do so. We would like to reiterate our conviction that the future Convention on Cluster Munitions should take into account existing relevant international instruments and, in particular Protocol V to the CCW on Explosive Remnants of War.

6. As in previous occasions the European Union encourages all participating States to spare no effort in order to ensure that these two weeks will allow us to conclude the process started last year successfully.

7. We wish you, Mr President, every success and assure you of EU member States' full support in your endeavors.

Thank you, Mr President.