

Statement at the First Review Conference
of the Convention on Cluster Munitions
By Mr. Ma Shengkun
Counsellor, Dept of Arms Control and Disarmament
MFA, China
(Dubrovnik, 7th Sept, 2014)

Mr. President,

At the outset, please allow me, on behalf of the Chinese Observer Delegation, to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of this important meeting. I am fully confident that, with your wisdom and diplomatic experience, you will guide this meeting to a great success. Taking this opportunity, I'd like to express my gratitude to the Croatian government for the preparation of the meeting and the warm hospitality extended to us.

The Convention on Cluster Munitions is an important achievement in the lofty cause of international humanitarianism. We are happy to witness the heartening progress achieved since the Convention entered into force 5 years ago, with production, use and transfer of clustered munitions considerably reduced, substantial progress made in stockpile destruction and clearance and risk reduction, and victim assistance and international cooperation significantly enhanced. We are Confident that the Dubrovnic Action Plan and the Dubrovnic Declaration, to be adopted by the Review Conference, will provide clear guidance to the States Parties for better implementation of the convention, making further contribution in alleviating humanitarian consequences from the indiscriminate use of cluster munitions.

Mr. President,

China has always been a constructive participant in the process of

international conventional disarmament and a staunch supporter of international efforts to address humanitarian concerns caused by cluster munitions. However, China ascribes to the goal and principles of the Convention and highly appreciates the humanitarian spirit embodied in the Convention. For years, China has maintained close exchanges and cooperation with member states and ISU of the Convention, and attended all the previous Meetings of States Parties.

China has been actively engaged in the effort to address humanitarian concerns caused by cluster munition under the framework of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. As a state party to the CCW and all its annexed protocols, China has been faithfully fulfilling obligations under the Protocol in terms of landmine and ERW clearance, stockpile destruction and victim assistance, contributing in its own way to addressing this humanitarian concern.

Firstly, China pursues responsible and prudent policies on the management of clustered munitions. As a staunch supporter of independent foreign policy of peace and with a national defence policy that is defensive in nature, China has never deployed cluster munitions outside its territory.

Secondly, China has made great efforts on landmine and ERW clearance and victim assistance. In the 1990s, China conducted two massive demining campaigns in the border areas, basically eradicating landmines and ERWs on its own territory. In the mean time, the Chinese government has continually provided substantial financial and policy support to previously mine and ERW-affected areas, in an effort to support their reconstruction and economic development. In order to help victims reintegrate into the society, the Chinese government has, in close cooperation with relevant civil society, provided them with assistance in terms of funding, materials, medicare, education and job-training.

Thirdly, China has been actively engaged in international humanitarian demining assistance. Since 1998, China has provided 80 million RMB demining assistance to more than 40 Asian and African countries, in the form of training programs, demining equipment, medical assistance and

field mine clearance assistance. With these efforts, 500 professional deminers were trained and 200,000 square meters of mine and ERW contaminated land were cleared. In 2010, China started to provide assistance to clustered munition victims in other countries. With a view to help affected countries in their capacity building, China has developed a series of cost-effective equipments and techniques that meet the standards of international mine action. Recent years has also witnessed breakthroughs on such projects as animal detection, mechanical detection and clean destruction of landmines.

China is of the view that full compliance with the UN Charter, non-interference in other countries' internal affairs, and resolution of disputes through political and diplomatic means are fundamental safeguards against damages caused by cluster munitions. Latest developments in West Asia and North Africa demonstrate that blatant interference by force, irresponsible transfer of weapons to non-state actors are major causes for persisting regional turbulence. Against the current background, to prevent weapons inventory in turmoil countries from falling into the wrong hands, and to deny extremist and terrorist organizations access to weapons including cluster munition, is of paramount importance to regional peace and security.

As the old Chinese saying goes, it is up to him who made the tie to untie. To clear cluster munition remnants at an early date, it is of vital importance to explicitly establish the principle that the users of cluster munitions, particularly those who used cluster munitions on other countries' territory, shall bear the primary responsibility for their clearance. At the same time, stark reality on the ground calls for enhanced international cooperation with emphasis on mobilizing more support for developing countries severely affected by cluster munitions and providing victims with timely and effective assistance.

Mr. President, as a member of the international community, China stands ready to continue to offer assistance to cluster-munitions-affected countries. In the mean time, China is willing to strengthen exchanges and explore effective means of cooperation with states parties, ISU of the Convention and other relevant international organizations, in our common efforts to eliminate civilian sufferings caused by clustered

munitions.

Thank you.