

Mr. President,

Let me start by congratulating you on your election as a President of this meeting and assure you of the readiness of my delegation to do our best for the successful outcome of this meeting. I would also like to thank your Government / Government of Lebanon for hosting this important event. And let me finish these introductory remarks by the confirmation of the Czech Republic's alignment with the declaration by the EU presented earlier.

In our statement to the First Meeting of the States parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions in Vientiane we gave the information about the actual state of the ratification process. We were glad to see several countries becoming State parties since then. It is my particular pleasure to inform you today that on July 8, 2011, the President of the Czech Republic put his signature on the ratification document thus finalizing the internal ratification procedure. The ratification document will be deposited with the UN Secretary General during the Treaty Event later this month in New York and, in less than 6 months after that, the Czech Republic will join 61 states and become a State Party to the Convention.

Mr. President,

My country has been promoting the adoption of legally binding instruments which would prohibit certain conventional weapons with indiscriminate damage effect on civilian population, and was amongst the firsts to sign the Convention on December 3, 2008, in Oslo. Since then, the Czech Republic has been actively supporting the main goals of this Convention – prohibition of use, production, stockpiling and transfer of the cluster munitions, clearance of contaminated land, destruction of stockpiles and victims assistance.

I would like to reiterate that the Czech Republic has never used cluster munitions in any military operation. Moreover it has not only removed its existing stockpiles from Army equipment, but since 2008 all cluster munitions (which represented 67 containers) and about 15 thousands pcs of explosive submunitions have been ecologically destroyed. Czech Ministry of Defence retained 611 pcs of explosive submunitions which may be strictly used for training purposes of Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) specialists only.

Mr. President,

The Czech Republic welcomed the adoption of the Vientiane Action Plan last December as a first important step towards fulfilling the main aims of the Convention. We fully understand the importance of its implementation and we stand ready to do what is needed in this direction.

In conclusion I would like to assure you of our willingness to participate actively in the work of this important international forum.

Thank you, Mr. President.