

**8th Meeting of the States Parties of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM)
September 3-5, 2018**

Topic: *Universalization*

When: *Monday, September 3, 10:00 to 13:00*

Where: *Palais des Nations, Room XVIII*

Opening Statement on Universalization by Canada

Thank you Mr. President,

As this is my first time taking the floor, on behalf of the Canadian delegation, I would like to express our appreciation to Nicaragua for the manner in which you have prepared the work of this 8th Meeting of States Parties and for your efforts in support of this Convention over the past year, its 10th year.

I wish to take this opportunity to warmly congratulate Namibia and Sri Lanka on becoming the newest States Parties to the Convention.

We would also like commend Croatia, Cuba, Slovenia and Spain for completing the destruction of their cluster munitions stockpiles in the year since our last Meeting.

Mr. President,

Many States, including significant users and producers of cluster munitions, are not yet Parties to the CCM. We call on all States to join the Convention, cease to use these weapons and destroy their stockpiles. We would also stress that non-Party states already have a legal obligation, during armed conflicts, to refrain from indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks with any weapon, including cluster munitions.

Canada condemns the continued use of cluster munitions in Syria and Yemen, which together have by far the highest casualty rates from cluster

munitions attacks and unexploded cluster munitions in the world. Our alarm at these statistics is further heightened by the fact that the overwhelming majority of casualties – 99% in the case of Syria – continue to be civilians.

The indiscriminate effects and human suffering caused by these weapons could not be more evident. We read these reports and headlines every day, hence the necessity that we achieve universalization is a here and now priority.

Mr. President,

Canada's commitment to universalization, indeed the commitment of all States Parties, imposes on all of us a special responsibility to work towards the full universalization of the CCM.

Canada is currently demarching all States outside of the Convention with whom we operate militarily to remind them of our responsibilities under the Convention and to call upon them to join the CCM. We are also demarching all other non-Party States, and signatories that have yet to ratify the Convention, to reinforce the importance of this Convention and to do our best to promote its universalization. A similarly large demarche exercise was conducted in 2016.

Often we learn that despite retaining cluster munitions for strategic security reasons, non-party states share our concerns for the indiscriminate effects of these weapons on civilians. This is an important opening which suggests that as our Convention grows, the weight of military considerations will no longer be enough to contain humanitarian concerns.

To a degree, this awareness is also reflected by the number of states that support the UN General Assembly resolution promoting the implementation Convention at First Committee.

As part of our ongoing commitment to addressing the impacts of cluster munitions and landmines, Canada contributed \$14 million to mine action in 2017 and committed \$16.6 million in our current fiscal year for this work.

This includes funding of projects in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Iraq, Lao PDR, Syria and Ukraine, where explosive remnants of war resulting from the use of cluster munitions are prevalent.

We are also in the final phases of approving new multi-year support to the institutions that support the implementation and the universalization of the Convention through Canada's Weapons Threat Reduction Program.

Mr. President,

Universalization of this Convention remains the best, and indeed, the only way to end all use of cluster munitions, and it is essential to addressing the humanitarian consequences of their use. Canada remains committed to doing its part to achieve this important goal. Thank you.