



REPUBLIC OF CUBA
Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office in Geneva
and International Organizations in Switzerland

**STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. PEDRO LUIS PEDROSO CUESTA, AMBASSADOR,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CUBA TO THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED
NATIONS IN GENEVA AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN
SWITZERLAND. Eighth Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on
Cluster Munitions. Geneva, September 4, 2018.**

Mr. President:

Cuba's commitment to multilateralism and International Humanitarian Law was reaffirmed with our adherence to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, on April 6, 2016.

This commitment is based on Cuba's long-standing position in favor of general and complete disarmament; in defense of a weapon-free world, in which the elimination of nuclear weapons must be a priority.

The figure of global military expenditures is alarming which amounts to 1.7 billion dollars and the recent announcements of millionaire increases in spending for the coming year is outraging¹. That is an unacceptable reality in the face of the alleged lack of resources to save the world from underdevelopment, hunger, poverty and epidemics.

In the short time since the entry into force of the Convention for Cuba in October 2016, to date, we have prepared ourselves in a serious and rigorous manner to guarantee strict compliance with the provisions of the Convention.

The philosophy of war and violence must be banished from foreign policy agendas. The death of innocent people, in any circumstance and place, must be rejected.

¹ SIPRI Fact Sheet, May 2018. TRENDS IN WORLD MILITARY EXPENDITURE, 2017.
https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2018-04/sipri_fs_1805_milex_2017.pdf

We reaffirm Cuba's firm support for the prohibition and total elimination of cluster munitions while condemning its use. The harmful and indiscriminate effects of these weapons are not compatible with the principles and norms of International Humanitarian Law. They cause unacceptable damage to the civilian population, even long after the cessation of combat actions.

Mr. President:

In April 2018, while presenting the National Compliance Report, Cuba declared the completion of the destruction of all stockpiles of cluster munitions and that such arsenals no longer exist under its jurisdiction or control. We are performing the internal procedures related to the Declaration of compliance, for future delivery.

The country was six years ahead of the deadline for the elimination of cluster munitions, set for October 2024, under Article 3 of the Convention.

National efforts to strictly enforce the provisions emanating from the Convention on Cluster Munitions,

including the rapid destruction of declared stocks, correspond to the firm and consistent Cuban position in favor of general and complete disarmament.

Mr. President:

Cuba's decision to become a State Party to the Convention on Cluster Munitions in no way modifies our objections to the manner in which it was negotiated.

We will continue to defend the principle that international instruments on disarmament, from which implications for all States are derived, should be discussed and adopted, in a transparent and inclusive manner, within the framework of the United Nations and not outside it. This is the best way to contribute to the subsequent universalization and effective implementation of these instruments.

On the other hand, Cuba reiterates the purpose of promoting frank discussions among the States Parties to the Convention, in the interest of finding practical and effective solutions to the ambiguities, limitations and

inconsistencies that, in our country's opinion, characterize several provisions of the Convention, which can lead to different interpretations that affect its uniform and effective application.

For example, the definition of cluster munitions used in the Convention excludes certain sophisticated types of such weapons.

In Cuba's opinion, all cluster munitions should be absolutely banned. There should be no exceptions for some of them due to the number of explosive submunitions they contain, or because they are equipped with self-destruction and self-deactivation mechanisms.

No technical device can be 100% reliable. No technological improvement, by itself, can solve the humanitarian problems that these weapons pose.

The definition of "transfer" contained in the Convention does not explicitly establish the prohibition of the transit of cluster munitions through the States Parties. In Cuba's opinion, the purpose of the total prohibition would be

seriously compromised if the interpretation that the transit or storage of cluster munitions in the States Parties is permissible, regardless of the transfer of ownership, prevails.

On the other hand, we do not share the interpretation of some, that taking advantage of the ambiguity of Article 21 of the Convention argue that in joint military operations with non-Party States, the prohibition of assistance established in Article 1 can be annulled by the provisions of Article twenty-one.

When participating in joint military operations with non-Party States, States Parties must in no way assist, encourage or induce activities prohibited by the Convention, including the employment, transfer or storage of cluster munitions.

Mr. President:

With regard to synergies between different conventions in the field of disarmament, Cuba does not favor the links between the Convention on Cluster Munitions and the

Convention on Antipersonnel Mines; given that these are instruments of different nature, scope and membership.

Cuba favors the promotion of synergies with conventions negotiated within the framework of the United Nations and broader in scope as is the case of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons; this synergy is justified by the close interrelation between cluster munitions and the categories of weapons covered in Protocols II and V of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons.

We believe that the spirit, letter and humanitarian approach of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons are in correspondence with many of the provisions of the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

Finally, I want to express that Cuba's position will always be clear. Any use of cluster munitions, by any actor, is unacceptable and should be condemned. We want this position to be explicitly reflected in the final documents of this meeting.

Thank you very much.

