

CCM – Intervention universalisation (tevens General Statement)

Mr. President,

Please allow me to congratulate you on the assumption of the presidency of this meeting. You can be assured of my delegation's full support.

[Ruimte voor persoonlijke noot Rob]

Mr. President,

The continued use of cluster munitions abhors us. These indiscriminate weapons continue to kill civilians, wreck communities and destroy livelihoods. This year, again, cluster munitions have made hundreds of victims around the world, mostly civilians.

We commend the excellent work done by the Cluster Munition Monitor, which provides invaluable documentation in this area. The most recent edition of the Monitor provides reports about the use of cluster munitions in various places, including in Syria and Yemen. It reports that the number of cluster munitions victims has more than doubled compared to the previous year.

Let me be clear: we condemn any use of cluster munitions by any actor. We have done so, collectively, in the Dubrovnik Declaration and in last year's Political Declaration. We should, collectively, continue to do so.

And we should look ahead as well.

Two years ago, we set an ambitious goal to have 130 States Parties to the Convention by 2020. We welcome the ratification of Benin and Madagascar, bringing the total number of States Parties to 102, with 17 Signatories.

With three more years to go to 2020, we need an additional 28 States to ratify or accede to the Treaty to reach our goal of 130 States Parties. We commend New Zealand, France and Zambia for organising a ratification seminar in Kampala in May of this year. Such events help to accelerate the pace of ratifications.

Mr. President,

Oftentimes, we hear that a State cannot accede to the Treaty as long as a neighbouring State has not acceded, and vice versa. This Catch-22 situation can and should be solved, for example via simultaneous accession

procedures, supervised by an independent party. Other confidence-building measures can also be of use. We commend the German presidency for initiating so-called 'structured dialogues' to this end.

This seventh Meeting of States Parties offers us the opportunity to renew our commitments, to work together and to strengthen our efforts. Let us work towards our common goal: a world free from cluster munitions by 2030.

Thank you Mr. President.