



**Seventh Meeting of the States Parties of the
Convention on Cluster Munitions
Geneva, 4-6 September 2017h**

**Statement by Dr. Palma D'Ambrosio
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Synergies

Mr. President,

Once again, let me commend Bosnia-Herzegovina and Switzerland for their extensive work as Coordinators on the General Status and Operations of the Convention, including on the issue of synergies between the ISU of the CCM and other Implementation Support Units. As one of the States Parties at the forefront of the debate on this topic, we are particularly glad to see that it remains high in our agenda.

We broadly support the text on synergies included in the draft Final Report of this meeting. It acknowledges that synergies are not only possible, but have already occurred in the form of thematic collaboration on issues of common concern. For us, this is an excellent result, especially considering the skepticism with which the idea of joint work between the CCM and the APMBC ISUs was received only a few years ago.

We continue to believe that these “bottom-up” practices have great utility and potential to strengthen implementation of both the CCM and the APMBC. We, therefore, welcome the encouragement to the ISU to further pursue such forms of (informal) cooperation with other implementation support units.

Mr. President,

When approaching the much more sensitive issue of a possible merging of the ISUs, let me first of all clarify that the main objective of having a joint ISU is not, in our view, to reduce the costs, even though in the long-run some savings can emerge from the process. What we want to attain is a more efficient use of existing resources and, more generally, a more effective and comprehensive action in support of both Conventions' implementation.

On the questions linked to the practical functioning of such a joint ISU, we understand the concerns expressed by some States Parties. At the same time, we believe that it is possible to address them, by devising a system to ensure that each Convention's membership supports the share of services it uses. In addition, clear lines of accountability would be established to ensure that, while serving both regimes, the Secretariat would be responsible to the respective sets of States Parties.

We continue to believe that the process which led to the merging of the Secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm Conventions could represent a source of inspiration for us. We are aware that the path leading to that result was not easy, nor short, but this should not be an obstacle to starting a reflection together with States Parties and the ISU of the Ottawa Convention on whether such a development could be possible and beneficial in the long term. For this reason, we welcome that the draft report calls on further analysis of the various practical, political and legal aspects involved in the possible merger of the CCM ISU with other implementation support units. Italy will be ready to contribute to such work.

Before concluding, Mr. President,

let me point out that given the current limited size of the CCM and the APMBC ISUs, the “gains” from merging them in terms of improved effectiveness and efficiency may seem limited at present. However, the added value that a joint secretariat could bring is destined to increase, given the increment of the tasks of the Units, and the parallel decrease of financial resources destined to fund them, which we are already witnessing. Therefore, we see great value in continuing our serious consideration and discussion of this topic.

Thank you.