



## **European Union Statement**

### **Seventh Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions International assistance and cooperation Geneva, 4-6 September 2017**

Mr. President,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Candidate Countries<sup>\*</sup>, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*, Montenegro\*, Serbia\* and Albania\*, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this statement.

2. At the outset, let me congratulate you on your election as the President of the Seventh Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions. It is a pleasure to see an EU Member State steering this important meeting. I would like to thank you for all your efforts devoted to the objectives of the Convention and assure you of our full cooperation and support.

3. The European Union has a long standing tradition of promoting an international system based on stronger multilateral cooperation and good global governance, in line with the EU's guiding principles of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law. The EU supports the humanitarian goal of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. We are deeply concerned about the reported indiscriminate use of cluster munitions affecting civilian populations in different parts of the world and the increasing number of victims. The EU calls upon all actors to refrain from such use and to fully observe the principles of International Humanitarian Law.

4. Since its entry into force, a significant number of States from every region of the world have ratified or acceded to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, including States with different political, economic and security perspectives. The membership of the Convention has grown in numbers since the Sixth Meeting of States Parties.

5. The Dubrovnik Action Plan adopted by the First Review Conference in 2015 sets out clear objectives to be achieved by 2020 by States Parties. We recall that States Parties at the 2016 Meeting agreed by consensus to implement their outstanding obligations as soon as possible, with an aim to

---

<sup>\*</sup>The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

implement all before 2030. The Convention on Cluster Munitions 7MSP Progress Report (CCM/MSP/2017/9) accurately reflects progress made and provides a good picture on the state of implementation of all obligations by States Parties.

6. Since the Convention entered into force, several EU Member States, most recently France, Germany and Italy, which are Parties to the Convention, have declared completion of their stockpile destruction even ahead of its mandatory deadline set by Article 3 of the Convention. Others, notably Bulgaria, Croatia and Slovakia, have reported progress in a destruction process with the aim to comply with Article 3 before their respective destruction deadlines.

7. The EU, as a top donor in the field of humanitarian mine action, has been financially contributing to mine action, including the clearance of cluster munitions. In addition, the EU has been providing substantive funds for various projects of socio-economic reintegration of victims and assisting in enhancing local and regional capacities. Further integration of mine action in wider development initiatives could ensure an increasing positive socio-economic and developmental impact. In the EU a gender based approach is also an integral part of our humanitarian actions. We recognize the efforts to seek synergies in the implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions and other humanitarian disarmament instruments, where possible.

8. The EU remains committed to supporting mine action, especially in the fields of risk education, clearance, stockpile destruction, and victim assistance. All the mine action projects supported by the EU incorporate gender and diversity aspects at the design, management and implementation levels. We continue to provide concrete and sustainable assistance to survivors of anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions incidents, their families and communities and assist victims according to their rights and needs. For example, the EU has funded projects aimed at creating employment opportunities and vocational training of survivors. In this regard, coordination on issues of victim assistance and international cooperation with other disarmament conventions could contribute to the development of common approaches and guiding principles.

9. On 4 August 2017, the Council of the EU decided to provide additional support for the implementation of the Maputo Action Plan of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. One of its objectives is to provide support for the implementation of the victim assistance actions of the Maputo Action Plan. This project will support States Parties to the Mine Ban Convention to embed the victim assistance aspects of the Maputo Action Plan in an integrated policy linked with national policies on human rights and the rights of persons with disabilities. The project aims to empower mine victims to become active agents in their own development. These efforts will also contribute to the objectives under this Convention.

10. The EU believes that in order for victim assistance efforts to be sustainable in a long term they need to be integrated into broader disability policies. We would like to underscore the linkage with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which sets out a wider framework to comprehensively address the needs of survivors and their full and equal participation in society. From its part, the EU, which is a full party to the CRDP, continues to pay attention to persons with disabilities in its development cooperation policies and programmes, while ensuring that the rights and needs of anti-personnel mine and cluster munition survivors are taken into account.

11. Enhanced ownership by affected States, improved coordination between donors, partner countries, the UN and amongst all stakeholders are essential in order to make our work as effective as possible and increase the impact of available resources. The EU sponsored a seminar in Thailand in March 2017 to facilitate exchange of experience and information among stakeholders in South East Asia. The EU also contributed to a workshop in Croatia in June 2017 for Western Balkan countries. Both regional meetings focused on the "country coalition concept" in the context of the CCM that puts forward a model where an affected country sides with a donor country or an international organisation in order to approach other donors and operators. We learned that countries that are successful in generating the necessary funds for mine action often do this by means of an elaborated national action plan that is developed in dialogue with one or more donor and a UN agency. National ownership is crucial for successful mine action. But national ownership requires a lot of know-how and capacity. Also here donors can play an important role. We would like to commend Germany, the current president of the CCM, for taking the initiative and putting forward the country coalition model.

12. We wish to emphasize the partnership among States, the UN entities, the ICRC, implementing partners and civil society to strengthen and promote the objectives of the Convention. We thank them for this fruitful cooperation.

Thank you, Mr. President