

**8th Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on Cluster
Munitions (CCM)
3-5 September 2018-Geneva
Statement by Sri Lanka**

Mr. President,

Sri Lanka is pleased to join this meeting which marks the culmination of a successful tenure of Nicaragua as the President of the 8th Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM). Your commitment to take forward the objectives of the CCM since Nicaragua was selected as President in September last year is deeply appreciated. We assure you, Mr. President, of our continued cooperation and active contribution during the Meeting of the States Parties, in a spirit of constructive engagement and dialogue that we manifest in our partnership with all treaty mechanisms.

We take this opportunity to thank the ‘Coordinators on Universalization’, France and Panama, for their excellent efforts, supported by the Implementation Support Unit (ISU), towards promoting universalization. We welcome Namibia, as the newest State Party to the Convention, today.

Sri Lanka is proud to be part of the disarmament community, with our active participation as a State Party, at this 8th Meeting today. We acceded to the Convention on 1 March 2018, as the 103rd State Party, after high level policy decision taken. As a country that has never used cluster munitions, Sri Lanka has always remained committed to the humanitarian imperatives of the Convention. We had participated at the previous States Party Meetings including the 2015 Review Conference only as an Observer. We appreciate the support, guidance and cooperation received from all stakeholders including the civil society, during this process.

Mr. President,

As we deliberate on Agenda Item - ‘**Review of the status and operation of the Convention and other matters important for achieving the aims of the Convention**’, we consider Namibia’s accession to the Convention as the 104th State Party a timely step, being the next country to join the Convention after Sri Lanka. This action by Namibia and accessions by other States in recent times mark a significant milestone in continuing efforts toward **universalization of** the CCM, particularly as the first decade of the Convention is being celebrated. As the primary objective of the Convention is to address humanitarian consequences and unacceptable harm caused by cluster munitions to civilians, through prohibition of all use, production, transfer and stockpiling of this injurious and indiscriminate weapon, every effort towards universalization must be celebrated as a positive step.

In this context, Mr. President, we note the target set for achieving 130 accessions by the Second Review Conference of the CCM in 2020, as stipulated in the **Dubrovnik Action Plan**. Sri Lanka stands ready to engage in efforts to garner support for the accession and adherence to the Convention, including through working together on a draft Resolution on Cluster Munitions at the General Assembly, building upon the good work done by the previous Presidents of the meetings of States Parties.

Further, as a country that is proactively engaged in building peace and advancing reconciliation following the end of conflict in May 2009, Sri Lanka is pleased to share its experiences including progress made in implementation of national initiatives, as well as challenges faced and collective efforts taken to address them, that had led to the accession process making Sri Lanka a State Party to this important humanitarian disarmament framework. It is pertinent to highlight that during our internal engagement and consultation with all stakeholders including the civil society, it was realized that accession to the CCM was the natural and rational step that Sri Lanka should take, having acceded to the Ottawa Treaty banning anti-personnel landmines. The latter culminated through a national process that was delicately undertaken, respecting the needs of civilians and the national security imperative.

Mr. President,

We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the excellent cooperation and technical support extended by the **Implementation Support Unit (ISU)**, in taking forward the universalization efforts and follow-up action. We are confident that the active role and contribution of ISU would further strengthen as universalization efforts gather momentum in the 10th year of the adoption of the Convention.

On the aspect of '**international cooperation and assistance**', we believe that all requests for assistance need to be met in line with the humanitarian and sustainable development strategies and programmes of the recipient countries. This is important to ensure that cooperation efforts will not only yield results- including better quality of life for victims, safety, minimized environmental impacts and predictable socio-economic development, but also encourage confidence-building and peacebuilding. Further, our collective efforts towards meaningful action in prohibiting one of the disastrous conventional weapon category – cluster munitions, would go a long way in ensuring the effective realization of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 16 on 'promoting peaceful, just, and inclusive societies'.

In conclusion Mr. President, it is important that all stakeholders avail of the opportunity presented by the 8th Meeting of States Parties, to go beyond business as usual, and provide momentum to collective efforts aimed at realizing the objectives and norms set forth in the Convention.

Thank you, Mr. President.