

Draft Remarks by Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu
High Representative for Disarmament Affairs
Ninth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions
Geneva, 2 September 2019

To be delivered by Ms. Anja Kaspersen, Director, ODA Geneva Office

Check against delivery

Ambassador Azeez,

Ambassador Baumann,

Ms. Mwemba,

At the outset, allow me to congratulate Sri Lanka for its strong lead towards the organization of this meeting amid significant financial difficulties and also for leading by example and assuming the Presidency of the Ninth Meeting of States Parties, shortly after having joined the Convention just last year.

I also wish to express a warm welcome to Ambassador Félix Baumann, recently appointed Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the Conference on Disarmament.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

More than ten years after its adoption, the Cluster Munitions Convention continues to represent a successful disarmament instrument firmly rooted in humanitarian imperatives. Widespread concern over the human suffering caused by these weapons, including their impact long after conflict has ceased, inspired States to establish a comprehensive norm against their use, development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, retention and transfer.

Preservation of this norm is critical and deepened commitment to full implementation of the Convention must remain a priority for its States Parties.

Thanks to this Convention, cluster munitions, one type of explosive weapon, have been comprehensively banned. We must ensure this prohibition remains fully intact and that compliance with international humanitarian law is fully protected.

In 2015, the international community adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Agenda helps break down silos by recognizing that only peaceful, just and inclusive societies can achieve sustainable development. Full and effective implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions directly supports more inclusive and peaceful communities laying the groundwork for sustainable development.

I am pleased that the Convention's implementation has largely been a success and there is much to applaud. Meetings of States Parties are an important moment to celebrate these achievements and take decisions for the way forward.

99% of all cluster munition stocks declared by States parties have been destroyed. As stockpile destruction progresses, so does land clearance, and most States Parties are on track to meet the Convention deadlines or have completed clearance ahead of time.

Victim assistance measures have been put in place in many countries, though more efforts are needed to support victims and communities.

National reporting, an essential tool to assess a country's implementation status, is at 65% - a high figure relative to the reporting rates of other disarmament Conventions. Over 89% of initial transparency reports have been received, which is a record for the Convention.

Regarding universalization efforts, since the Meeting of States Parties last year, the States parties to the Convention have increased to 106.

I congratulate, The Gambia and the Philippines on their accession to the Convention. With the aim of reaching 130 States Parties by the Second Review Conference next year -a goal under the Dubrovnik Action Plan- we need to redouble our collective outreach to encourage other States to consider becoming parties.

I would be remiss not to acknowledge the determination and hard work of civil society and international organizations in support of the Convention's success.

In his agenda for Disarmament, *Securing Our Common Future*, the Secretary-General called for strengthened partnerships for disarmament between Governments, civil society organizations and expert groups. This Convention is an example of what

can be achieved when the expertise of different stakeholders is leveraged towards a common goal and diverse constituencies are engaged.

Unfortunately, the success of the Convention has not been matched by timely financial commitments of States. This year, the meeting was reduced to two days due to insufficient funds and the absence of any financial measures to ensure liquidity.

Ultimately, the success of the Convention is hampered by non-payments or late payments by a significant number of States parties to the Convention and States participating in its meetings.

As you are aware, these financial issues are structural in nature and are currently impacting all the disarmament Conventions supported by UNODA Geneva. I trust that your discussions will lead to measures to ensure that this Convention is put on a solid financial footing.

The Office for Disarmament Affairs stands ready to fully support your efforts.

Thank you.