



United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action

Ninth Meeting of States parties to the *Convention on Cluster Munitions*

(2 – 4 September 2019)

Statement on Universalization

Mr. President,¹

The following statement is delivered on behalf of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA), comprising the United Nations entities² involved in mine action. The United Nations congratulates Sri Lanka on assuming the Presidency shortly after having joined the Convention and hopes that it will inspire other States to do the same in the future.

Excellencies,

The United Nations is deeply concerned by the reports and allegations of the use of cluster munitions by States not party to the Convention. Together, we should continue to reinforce the stigma against the use of cluster munition and increase our collective efforts to convince new States to join the Convention preventing further contamination at a time when 26 countries and three other territories remain contaminated by Cluster Munitions³.

¹ Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka, Mr. Aliyar Lebbe Abdul Azeez.

² The 12 departments and offices of the Secretariat, specialized agencies, funds and programmes are: the United Nations Mine Action Service of the Department of Peace Operations, the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Health Organization (WHO). The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and the World Bank are observers.

³ International Campaign to Ban Landmines – Cluster Munition Coalition; *Cluster Munition Monitor 2019*; August 2019.



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The Convention continues to make progress towards universalization, and the United Nations congratulates the Gambia and the Philippines as the 105th and 106th State Parties. However, additional efforts are needed to reach the ambitious goal set in the **Dubrovnik Action Plan** of 130 States parties by 2020. The United Nations calls on all States to join this important instrument and invites the 14 signatories⁴ to ratify the Convention as soon as possible.

The United Nations also welcomes the regional initiatives promoting universalisation, including the recent Asia-Pacific workshop held in Manila on 18-19 June 2019, organised by the Philippines and New Zealand.

Excellencies,

It is crucial that States parties comply with all the provisions of the Convention. In 2018, over 135,000 submunitions were destroyed.⁵ The United Nations congratulates Botswana and Switzerland for completing the destruction of their stockpiles leaving only five States parties with ongoing obligations under Article 3.

⁴ Angola, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Cyprus, Djibouti, Haiti, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, São Tomé and Príncipe, Tanzania and Uganda.

⁵ Mine Action Review; *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2019*; August 2019.



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2018 marks also the highest level of clearance ever recorded: more than 128 square kilometres of cluster munition-contaminated area cleared.⁶ The United Nations commends the efforts of affected States with the support of donor States in advancing towards a world free of cluster munitions. Nevertheless, a number of States continues to face challenges in meeting their stockpile destruction and clearance deadlines and when it is the case, the United Nations invites them to fully comply with their obligations and submit an extension request, as has been done by Bulgaria, Germany and Lao PDR this year. Extensions request provide an opportunity for States parties to present on their challenges and seek assistance.

Excellencies,

As more States become parties to this Convention, and thanks to the outreach and sensitization campaigns by active civil society actors, cluster munition investments have reportedly decreased from USD 31 billion in 2017 to USD 9 billion in 2018.⁷ Moreover, the number of financial institutions found to have invested in cluster munition producers in 2018 was reduced by half,⁸ and casualties from cluster munitions pursue a steady decrease. This is a remarkable achievement.

Thank you.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ PAX; *Worldwide Investments in Cluster Munitions: A shared responsibility*; December 2018.

⁸ Ibid.