



Republic of Ghana

**OPENING REMARKS
BY
THE DELEGATION OF GHANA
AT THE FIRST REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE CONVENTION ON CLUSTER
MUNITIONS (CCM)
TUESDAY 8TH SEPTEMBER 2015 DUBROVNIK CROATIA**

**Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen**

My delegation, wishes to join other speakers in congratulating you on your election as President of this review conference.

I would also like to express our thanks and appreciation to the Government and people of Croatia for the excellent organization of this meeting and the warm hospitality extended to us since our arrival in this beautiful city of Dubrovnik.

Mr. President,
We wish to note that some African States have been affected by cluster munitions. In the spirit of solidarity, many States from our continent including Ghana have played a leadership role in the creation of the Convention, and remain firmly committed to ensure the universal adherence to the convention and its full implementation.

Even though we are not an affected State, we consider that for the sake of all people, that, this weapon has to be taken out of conventional weapons. Every country is responsible in this course, whether they are party or not to this Convention. In this regard let me also express our deep disapproval of its use in

the past and in some ongoing conflicts, in fact we condemn those countries for using banned weapons.

This is immoral and must not happen again in the 21st Century, a Century in which all people irrespective of their geographical location or status in society are staking their rights to freedom and aspire to impact positively on their societies. The possibility to be killed or maimed by unexploded ordinances must be the reason for the continued denial of the aspirations of any person anywhere, and Ghana is ready to help this course.

We therefore call on those involved to stop using these weapons and to take all necessary steps to prevent future use. We call for investigations and the findings should be made public so that those responsible can be held accountable.

Mr. President.

Our most grievous challenge today, concerns the rise of non-state actors which are replete in our region in intra-state wars and various acts of terrorism. Ghana therefore, support the call for the criminalization and stigmatization of the production, stockpile and use of Cluster Munitions by State actors to forestall its potential fall into the hands of Non-State actors.

Mr. President

We support the call by H:E Manuel Gonzalez Sanz on the opening of this conference, we have a moral duty to speak up to condemn any use of cluster munitions by any actor. This duty leads us to support the adoption of the political declaration as it was presented on Monday morning.

Indeed Ghana will support a political declaration that is strong and that shows the resolve of States Parties to ensure the universalization of the convention, as per Article 21, and to ensure full respect of the letter and spirit of the convention.

Mr. President,

The Dubrovnik Action Plan is a good document that was prepared in consultation with all relevant stakeholders. We wish to express our profound gratitude to the coordinators for the important work accomplished on this document. We therefore wish to express our strong support for the adoption of the Dubrovnik Action Plan as it was presented on Monday morning.

Mr. President,

We welcome the call for States to express our views on the future programme of meeting of the convention. We wish to note that this convention is still relatively young and requires sustained attention through bi-annual meetings. We therefore support the preservation of the current intersessional meetings and meeting of States Parties.

Mr. President,

We welcome the appointment of Sheila as the head of the ISU. We are convinced that, with her outstanding experience, she will steer the affairs of the ISU successfully. We also salute the immense contribution of the UNDP BCPR and express our profound gratitude to them. As we say in Ghana, Ayeekoo to you Sara and Estelle most especially for your extreme hard work and contributions towards the advancement of the implementation of the convention.

Mr. President,

We would like to urge all of you present here today to keep in mind the people who are not at this meeting. These are the civilians at risk daily from the presence of cluster munitions and who have been killed or injured by these weapons.

These are the families who will provide care and support to the disabled survivors for the rest of their lives. And these are the communities that try to resume a normal life in the presence of unexploded submunitions while waiting to learn which of their sons or daughters will be the next victim.

Mr. President,

It is the commitment to a cause that brings progress. We trust that just like Ghana, you are also committed to this singular objective of global peace and a world free of Cluster Munitions and we are confident this Conference would achieve its objective.

We wish to note in concluding that our common circumstances has brought us together and we should take this golden opportunity once again to further deepen the norms of the prohibition of Cluster Munitions use in the world. This is the only true legacy we can leave behind for all those victims who have suffered from the effects of cluster munitions.

I thank you.