

Statement by the Lao Delegation on Universalization

At Second Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions

16 September 2011, Beirut

Mr. President,

Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Lao delegation, I would like to express our gratitude to Japan, as Friend of the President on Universalization for the progress report on the status and activities with regards to universalization since the 1MSP.

Mr. President,

I am so pleased to learn that, since our First Meeting of States Parties, 17 more states have ratified or acceded to the Convention making the total number of states parties to 63. I would also like to join others to congratulate Swaziland that has just presented an instrument of accession during our meeting here in Beirut and Switzerland that has announced her readiness to present an instrument of ratification very soon. The continued growth of the membership of the Convention is the testimony that the noble humanitarian objective of our convention is desirable among the member states of the United Nations. This deadly weapon or some called it a silent killing toy, since many victims of cluster munitions are children, should have no place in today's security context. As the evident of the impacts from cluster munitions in many countries around the world, especially in my country and in Lebanon where we are meeting right now, speaks for itself that cluster munitions must be eliminated from this world as soon as possible in order to save lives and limbs of the innocent civilian population and for the sake of the socio-economic development so that all aspects of human rights could be fully enjoyed by our people.

As President of the First Meeting of States Parties, Laos has done its utmost to promote the noble humanitarian objective of the Oslo Convention with the view to making the Convention universal. We took every possible opportunity to promote the Convention and urge states not parties to consider acceding to it as soon as possible. This has been carried out in many fora, such as in ASEAN context, in Non-Aligned Movement forums and at a number of bilateral meetings of which Lao delegation has made its call loud and firm for the promotion of

the Convention. Again at this coming United Nations General Assembly, which will be held from next week on, we will reiterate our call for the universalization of the Oslo convention.

Mr. President,

Nationally, in order to ensure that our local authorities and people understand fully our obligations under the Convention, we organized meetings, workshops and made series of TV and radio spots on air, particularly on the special occasion such as Mine Actions Day and celebration of the Entry in Force of the Convention on 1<sup>st</sup> of August, which we just organized last month that included exhibition and activities to educate people about the impact and danger of UXO and the Convention. We also organized a football tournament called “Adieu Bombies” as part of the activities that brought agencies concerned working on the issue of UXO in Laos to participate in this friendly and enjoyable game.

Apart from this, we are planning to organize more workshops and seminars at provincial level aimed at making the concerned local authorities fully understand our obligations under the Convention, particularly on clearance, risk reduction education and victim assistance.

Mr. President,

Our Convention is relatively young and we have to work hard in order to meet our goal of the world without cluster munitions. In this regards, I would like to express our appreciation for the work done by international organizations and civil societies that insert their strong voice and their tireless efforts to promote the universalization of the Oslo Convention. I once again urge those countries that have not done so to consider ratifying or acceding the convention as soon as possible in order to make our world safer from cluster munitions.

I thank you for your kind attention.