



Thank you, Mr. President,

It has been a challenging year with many distractions for governments, organizations and us as people. But we need to keep our eyes on the ball and do not let the current temporary challenges influence our long-term planning for this Convention.

We strongly believe the CCM needs an intersessional work programme. The implementation and universalization of the convention are so to say in the heat of the moment and it is time to accelerate, not to put our foot on the breaks. We do need another informal opportunity to hear updates on progress made by states; we need to hear from countries as South Africa and Guinea Bissau on what is happening with their stocks of cluster munitions; we need to have a public exchange on extensions to clearance and stock destruction deadlines; and hear from signatories and hold outs what steps they are taking to join the Convention.

We understand such intersessional meetings would be at NO COST to States Parties. These meetings should not be perceived as an additional burden and yet another meeting diplomats need to cover. Indeed, we are fully aware there are numerous meetings that you need to attend and many of them could be easily done away with. However, at meetings of this Convention real business and work is done. In addition, an intersessional meeting should be short, focused, and held back to back with the intersessional meeting of the Mine Ban Treaty, to build on efficiencies and synergies.

Therefore we, as the Netherlands and Panama, believe there is need and space to be more ambitious in re-introducing the intersessional meetings under the Convention.

In terms of the future machinery, the current proposal has some serious gaps that should be filled by its adoption in February. There is no necessarily need for expanding of the current structures, but rather updating and clarifying their respective roles and mandates.

As we have repeatedly raised the ongoing use of cluster munitions in Syria, as well as new instances of use elsewhere, constitute the single biggest challenge for the Convention and need to be addressed more effectively in the future. The Second Review Conference should adopt a new mechanism that would facilitate States Parties' coordinated response to instances of use and defend the norms established by the Convention. Such proposal could include:

- A decision to request the successive CCM Presidencies or the Presidential Troika to actively engage with States not party to achieve the above objectives on behalf of all State Parties.
- A decision to establish a group of interested States (or extend the scope of the recently established informal group on universalization) to promote the above objectives through concerted international action.

- A decision that future Convention meetings (MSPs, Intersessionals and Review Conferences) will monitor progress in this area, including through reports by the Presidency and States Parties on actions taken and progress achieved.

Another gap in the machinery is related to the new section in the LAP in regard to 'Measures to Ensure Compliance', which we very much welcome. With the new section, it renders necessary to clarify who within the Convention's machinery will be in charge of facilitating and following up on matters related to compliance. From our perspective, the mandate of the President and the Coordinators of the General Status and Operation of the Convention should be amended to include this area of responsibility. Related to this, the President's mandate should also be expanded to reflect its role in the so called 'early warning mechanism.'

Also, as we all agreed the pace of universalization has not been satisfactory and should be accelerated. Next to a truly active and engaged working group on universalization, we should consider identifying a special envoy or a similar figure as proposed by Italy tasked with advancing universalization, in particular at high level.

Lastly, we agree it is important to factor gender mainstreaming and diversity into the future work under the Convention, and to include a clear proposal in this regard for adoption at the Second Review Conference.

A review conference is a unique opportunity, once in 5 years. Let's not miss it and ensure that for the coming years the convention is equipped with the right tools to deliver the results we want.

Thank you.