



**REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE**

**STATEMENT**

**BY**

**HIS EXCELLENCY MR. HENRIQUE BANZE**

**DEPUTY MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND CO-OPERATION**

**AT THE**

**DIPLOMATIC CONFERENCE ON THE CLUSTER MUNITIONS**

**DUBLIN, 19 MAY 2008**

**Mr. Chairman,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

At the outset, I would like to express on behalf of the delegation of the Republic of Mozambique, our warmest congratulations to the Republic of Ireland for his assumption of the chairmanship of this Diplomatic Conference on Cluster Munitions and to the Government of Ireland for having acceded to host such an important Gathering.

The adoption of a Convention banning cluster munitions, in the words of the Secretary-General this morning adds tremendous contribution to the efforts of building a safer world.

I also wish to extend my congratulations to the Governments of Norway, Peru, Austria and New Zealand for the important role they played towards the negotiation of a legally binding international instrument with the aim of prohibiting the use, production, transfer and stockpiling of cluster munitions that cause unacceptable harm to civilians.

Civil society institutions and organizations deserve our commends for their commitment to the goals of banning cluster munitions.

**Mr. Chairman,**

The testimonies provided by the victims of cluster during this process should raise our conscience on implications of continuing to produce, stockpile and use cluster munitions, and should strengthen our resolve to hasten our work, ironing out our differences, and ensure that at the end of this Conference we come out with an agreed text for the Convention banning all cluster munitions that cause unacceptable harm to civilians.

Meanwhile, we have heard their testimonies, spelling out the horrors they had to endure and the injustices they went through due to these sub-munitions.

Indeed, they represent hundreds of them; they are the voice of many, many victims who had fallen prey to these subtle instruments of random death.

They are people, who like us carried out their lives normally, and suddenly they saw their lives dramatically and severely changed. Day in and Day out, more victims are being affected by remnants of cluster munitions and this number keep growing unchecked.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

We cannot afford to fail; neither fail to meet the expectations of thousands of suffering innocent people all over the world.

The humanitarian circumstances surrounding the call for an urgent Convention banning the cluster munitions are similar to those that dictated the negotiations and adoption of the 1997 Convention on the prohibition of the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of Anti-personal mines and their destruction.

Allow me, to share with you my country's experience, not long ago, whereby we were confronted with severe humanitarian consequences in the aftermath of war as a direct result of land-mines and other remnants of war that left large portions of the country side contaminated. Our experience demonstrates that despite generous support by the international community, we are still facing with related accidents that render negative economic and social repercussions, and impact on our actions for poverty eradication and development.

In this context, we regard victim assistance as an essential item in the negotiation of the Convention on cluster munitions. Therefore, I call for the need to agree on a text that seeks to restore victims' inherent dignity, to secure without discrimination all human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons with disabilities, as well as to foresee the provision of medical care and restoration of their livelihood.

In the same line, I would like to stress that victims' assistance becomes meaningful when accompanied by preventive actions like risk education and public awareness.

**Mr. Chairman,**

As representative of an African country, I see as potential danger for the continent the risk of proliferation of cluster munitions.

The Livingstone Declaration lays the ground upon which the African States should work tirelessly for a Convention that strongly prohibits the use, production, transfer and stockpiling of cluster munitions. In doing so, we believe we will succeed in preventing a scenario whereby Africa would become a dumping ground for obsolete cluster munitions.

In this context, my delegation endorses the statement by Zambia on behalf of the African countries.

We wish to commend steps taken by certain countries aimed at prohibiting, restricting or suspending the use, stockpiling, and production and transfer of cluster munitions. At the same time, we wish to commend the government of Uganda, for pioneering in this direction among African countries.

We strongly believe that all States have moral obligations to embrace causes that contribute for the enhancement of the Humanitarian Law which stresses the importance of establishing distinction between civilians and military objects, civilian and combatants during military operations.

The indiscriminate resort to cluster munitions in time of war so far failed the upholding and furthering of this principle of humanity. We are aware of the right of each state to choose the method of war, but the use of cluster munitions we simply consider it as a wrong choice.

This is mainly why we decided to subscribe/endorse the Oslo Declaration, the Wellington Declaration as well as the Livingstone Declaration. Therefore, we stand ready to participate in the final stage of the negotiations aimed to conclude a legally binding international instrument that would prohibit the use, production, transfer and stockpiling of cluster munitions that cause unacceptable harm to civilians and to establish a framework for cooperation and assistance that ensures adequate provision of care and rehabilitation to survivors and their communities, clearance of contaminated areas, risk education and destruction of stockpiles.

**I thank you Mr. Chairman**