

Hungarian Intervention at the Second Meeting of State Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions

Mr. President, Mme Chair,

- Thank you. It is a great honour to speak at this important event in the history of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. I would like to thank for the government of Lebanon for being such a wonderful host.
- This Convention represents a unique achievement of multilateral diplomacy. It is the first new agreement on disarmament in over a decade, and it is also a rare example of humanitarian concerns leading to an outright ban on an entire class of weapons.
- The success of the Oslo Process is in a large part due to the intense level of cooperation between governments and civil society, whose expertise and persistence played a vital role in getting to where we are today.
- This category of weapons presents a particularly heinous threat to civilian populations caught up in an armed struggle. And the rationale for banning these munitions is quite clear: whatever battlefield advantage can be gained through the use of cluster munitions is simply outweighed by its potential to harm civilian populations. As such, the Convention codifies both a moral and a legal obligation to protect civilians in armed conflict.
- Ladies and Gentlemen. Over the years, a strong and visible commitment to disarmament and non-proliferation has become one of the hallmarks of Hungary's foreign policy. Out of this conviction, we attach as much importance to furthering the cause of the Oslo Process as we did in the case of the Ottawa Process.
- Hungary, signed the document in Oslo in December 2008. We have recently begun the process of transposing the Convention into Hungarian law, and we expect our ratification process to be completed during this fall session of the National Assembly.
- Furthermore, I am pleased to announce that by June 30th, 2011 Hungary destroyed **all** of its cluster munitions. We could have quietly disposed of these weapons behind closed doors and after the Convention enters into force in Hungary. But we chose a pro-active approach instead and decided to fulfil our stockpile destruction obligations before the conclusion of the ratification process.
- We also opted for guaranteeing maximum openness in our destruction process. This March we organized a public event to demonstrate the destruction of our stockpile to where we invited the representatives of the UN, ICRC, OSCE, the EU, the defence attachés accredited to Hungary and the media to observe. We have also made recordings of this event, presented it in Geneva and made it available on the OSCE's website and YouTube, which could be used as references for future destructions.

Thank you.