

Cluster Munition Coalition Statement on Universalisation  
Convention on Cluster Munitions Third Meeting of States Parties  
Oslo, 13 September 2012



Thank you Mr. President.

The CMC is pleased to be in the presence of such a great number of states represented here in Oslo this week, including States Parties; signatories, and most impressively, approximately 40% of the non signatories, the states yet to join.

Many speakers have talked of partnership this week, and it is this partnership of states, civil society and non-governmental organisations that keeps the treaty strong, and that makes universalization efforts successful. This is a partnership that welcomes new members with open arms and we are pleased to hear announcements this week of countries that will soon become part of this diverse and committed partnership.

111 states from every region of the world have joined the Convention, demonstrating widespread international rejection of cluster munitions. At least 42 countries that have stockpiled, produced, and/or used cluster munitions have joined the Convention, including key international and regional military powers. Several of the world's most affected states have joined the Convention, including Afghanistan, Iraq, Lao PDR, and Lebanon. A total of 20 NATO nations have adhered as well. Their participation shows that a wide variety of states with different political, economic, and security perspectives all support the cluster munitions ban.

We congratulate the 11 states that have ratified since the 2nd Meeting of States Parties (Italy, Czech Republic, Dominican Republic, Mauritania, Cote d'Ivoire, Honduras, Sweden, Togo, Hungary, Cameroon, and Switzerland), and welcome Trinidad and Tobago who acceded to the Convention in the last year.

The Cluster Munition Coalition has identified universalization as its number one priority for the coming years, and stands ready, as always, to continue to work in partnership with you and to support, and admittedly to push you to make more progress, more rapidly, in universalising this treaty.

We were pleased to work in partnership with the governments of Ghana, Zambia and Togo to support the Accra Regional Conference on the Universalisation of the Convention in May this year and we will continue to our support to ensure the Accra Action Plan reaches its goals. We are pleased that Latin American states and the Caribbean intend to put a significant focus on universalisation next year too and will work closely with all governments supporting initiatives for enabling entire regions to become cluster bomb free.

In the last year we have also participated in regional fora in Lebanon and Croatia, and of course played a key role organising and participating in national meetings on cluster munitions. On 1 August CMC members in more than 40 countries celebrated the second anniversary of the entry into force of the convention, by joining a worldwide campaign action day demanding an end to the suffering that cluster

munitions cause. The overwhelming message of the day was for full universalisation of the convention, and we pushed this message on the global day for mine action too.

We believe that every country in the world can join and should join the convention. It is a question of political will and placing a priority on the protection of civilians. We continue to call on countries with stockpiles, and former users, to renounce this weapon by joining the convention. We also encourage remaining affected states to join in order to benefit from the collective support the treaty can bring. We believe in strength in numbers and encourage the majority of countries for which the obligations of the treaty will be light, to get onboard without delay. Each ratification and accession strengthens the growing global stigma against cluster munitions and protects civilians from future harm. We believe this stigma is strong, and growing stronger with every effort we collectively make.

It's my pleasure to see almost half of the Middle East and North African non signatories which are also stockpilers represented here this week including Jordan, Libya, Morocco, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Sudan. We invite them to follow the historical developments happening regionally and shift their position and statements towards action by joining the convention at the earliest opportunity.

We sometimes hear the excuse that national security needs prohibit a state from joining the convention. We must be clear that military need is no longer a valid basis on which to remain outside of the convention – it is now widely acknowledged that this weapon is outdated and counterproductive for modern militaries. Cluster munitions are also poor defensive weapons, leaving behind a large number of explosive submunitions that would endanger a state's own population. In addition, the political cost of using cluster munitions, even for states not party, has become very high given the Convention's powerful stigmatizing force.

More than half the world has joined the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which is impressive, but it is not yet enough. To repeat our call made at the intersessionals in April this year: if each state party or signatory could reach out to work in partnership with at least one non-signatory country, we would be in an even stronger position by the Fourth Meeting of States Parties in Zambia next year. Remember that Article 21 of the Convention makes it a legal requirement for States Parties to promote universalization.

We call upon All countries including Middle east and North Africa countries to not to use cluster munitions under any circumstances and to investigate and report back on any allegations of use.

The Convention on Cluster Munitions stands as the sole international standard on cluster munitions and it indeed sets a strong standard of which we are proud. We are thankful for the prevention of untold harm to civilians that this treaty is enabling and of the trailblazing message that it sets. <Together, let us communicate this message - and inspire the rest world to stand up and say 'never again' and to realise that with this treaty, the solution against cluster bombs is within reach.