

**OPENING STATEMENT BY HONOURABLE GIVEN LUBINDA, MINISTER OF  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA AT THE THIRD MEETING  
OF STATES PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON CLUSTER MUNITIONS, 11-  
14 SEPTEMBER 2012 – OSLO, NORWAY**

**Mr. President Ambassador Steffen Kongstad,**

**The Secretary General,**

**Vice President of the ICRC,**

**the United Nations High Representative of the UN Secretary General,**

**Your Excellencies,**

**Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.**

At the outset, I would like to express my delegation's appreciation for the warm hospitality and the excellent facilities accorded to us since our arrival in this beautiful city of Oslo.

My delegation is honored to participate in this important meeting of States parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM).

Allow me to congratulate the Royal Kingdom of Norway for assuming the Presidency of the CCM. Let me also congratulate you Mr. President for the confidence shown in you personally by your Government by allowing you to hold the Presidency of the CCM on its behalf.

Mr. President,

Oslo has a special place in the history of the Convention because it was in this city that, five years ago, the diplomatic process on the convention began with the adoption of the Oslo Declaration. It was here where States pledged their commitment to the adoption of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. It was also in this city that the Convention was opened for signature. On this score, I am proud to state that Zambia was among the first States to sign the CCM.

I would like to join distinguished speakers in paying special tribute to the Government of Lebanon for a successful Presidency during the 2011/2012 period. Under their presidency, important steps were made to advance the CCM agenda, in particular, their tireless efforts and numerous consultations in an effort to execute the

mandate of the 2<sup>nd</sup> MSP on a possible Implementation Support Unit (ISU). I am confident that Lebanon will continue to be actively engaged in the work of the Convention as was demonstrated in the initial stage of the Oslo Process.

**Mr. President,**

This session marks the Third Meeting of States Parties on the CCM since its adoption in 2008. We welcome the fact that 75 States parties have ratified the Convention which represents an increase of 16% of States parties since the 2MSP. I would like to appeal to all States that are yet to accede or ratify the Convention to do so as soon as possible so that Universalisation can be achieved. We are still in the formative years of the Convention and so it is only logical that we maintain the momentum in expanding membership.

Zambia has since played a critical role in the universalisation of the Convention. This has been done in our capacity as Coordinator for sub Saharan Africa on Universalisation. It is our belief that total universalisation will ultimately lead to accelerated implementation of the Convention



**Mr. President,**

The protection of civilians in any situation of war is an important aspect which should be emphasized in the Convention in order that the Convention continues to contribute to the strengthening of the body of international humanitarian law. This will become a reality when warring parties respect the rule of distinction at all times. In this regard, Zambia wishes to urge all those countries that are still using Cluster Munitions against civilian targets to desist from doing so.

Furthermore, the rights of Victims in line with article five of the Convention ought to be respected by all Parties. It is in this regard that Zambia welcomes the focus of Norway's presidency.

**Mr. President,**

States Parties have consistently, through national implementation measures, asserted the authority of the Convention as the main international legal instrument in this field. Thus far, the major impact of national legislation has been the strengthening of the credibility and integrity of the Convention. I would like to assure this august house that the Zambian Government attaches great importance to

the Convention and as such will ensure that we accelerate the process of domesticating the CCM.

**Mr. President,**

African States have been most affected by the indiscriminate effects of cluster munitions even though almost none of them are non-producers and very few are users of the Cluster Munitions. It is therefore important that Africans forge ahead and ensure that a Cluster Munitions free world is achieved.

It is my fervent hope that the deliberations of this meeting, apart from taking stock of the practical implementation measures, will seek to further strengthen the normative framework of international humanitarian law and examine how best it can be implemented.

The international community and States Parties to the Convention in particular, have a responsibility in ensuring adherence to the Convention and that the core rules of International Humanitarian Law are respected. I wish to state Zambia's readiness to work and partner with other States parties to the CCM as well as international organizations and the civil society.

In conclusion, Mr. President, Zambia wishes to humbly register its willingness to host the 4<sup>th</sup> MSP, as we see it as an opportunity to address the many challenges surrounding cluster munitions, including the protection of civilians and the Universalisation of the CCM.

**I thank you.**