

CCM Universalization Presentation by Japan

Mr. President, thank you very much for giving me an opportunity to make a statement as one of the coordinators on universalization.

First, let's take stock of where we are.

Since the 2MSP, 12 countries have ratified or acceded to the CCM.

Now we are looking forward for 36 signatories to become State Parties of the Convention. Among them, 21 are African countries.

So the current status is as follows. States Parties 75, signatory states 36 and non state party 84. As mentioned by every country in their general statements, significant progress has been made in expanding the membership of the Convention. This result was achieved thanks to the diligent efforts by the joining states themselves, other states parties, UN and other international organizations, and civil society, in particular CMC. Those important outreach activities over the year by the Convention community are mentioned in the Oslo Progress Report. I hope they will be reported in details by various actors later.

So, my presentation will be limited to the results of a joint global demarche conducted by Japan and Portugal as coordinators on universalization. We have conducted it through our overseas missions in the months of June and July this year. Through our 87 resident missions in the world and 26 non-resident points of contact, we submitted a joint signed letter to these countries and sought updates on their status of consideration to join the CCM. Our joint letter emphasized that CCM stands as the sole international legal instrument that aims at putting an end to the civilian suffering caused by cluster munitions, and urged countries to consider supporting this important cause, by becoming a State Party to the Convention.

When we conducted our joint demarche, almost all Non-State Parties welcomed our visit and shared the humanitarian concern of cluster munitions with us, despite their various positions with regard to Convention.

Now I want to report the overall trend on states' consideration on the ratification or accession to the Convention by classifying their responses in three groups. As my intention is to show a general trend, the exact figures are not so important and will be subject to change.

Group I is a group of about 26 countries who expressed earnest interest in ratifying CCM in the near future. This number excludes Canada, Australia, Peru and Chad, since we expected their immediate ratification or accession from their announcements at the intersessional meetings and this meeting. Countries in this first category either provided specific information about ongoing preparations for ratification or accession, or their clear intention to join the Convention in the near future. Out of these, 19 countries stated that they were in the process of ratification. 5 Non State Parties also expressed interest in becoming a signatory.

Group II is a group of around 27 countries that expressed their understanding about the humanitarian objectives of CCM but have specific obstacles that prevents them from immediate ratification or accession. In this group, a notable number of countries expressed that they had supported the regulation on cluster munitions under the CCW process. Some countries also argued that they would like to see the main producers and possessors of cluster munitions to become State Parties to the CCM. We as State Parties, need to continue to reassure them that CCM is an effective framework and that we need their participation to solidify it further. The fact that not all major producers and stockpilers are not State Parties at this moment should not be an excuse for the rest of the world to shy away from participation in the CCM.

A number of countries in this Group also mentioned that they find difficulties in joining CCM before other countries in their region join. If the reciprocity is truly the only reason that holds them back from becoming a State Party, we encourage those countries to take steps for a regional or sub-regional initiative, for instance, joint ratifications. I believe that commencing such discussions in a regional setting would be a significant step for more memberships in a specific region.

The Third Group is those countries that have expressed that a major improvement in their security environment or a major change in their domestic political circumstances would have to take place before it considers signing CCM. Many of these countries do not deny the severe consequences on civilians caused by cluster munitions, however, they tend to emphasize that national security concerns or the excuse that major producers and stockpilers are not State Parties override the importance of becoming State Party to the Convention. Indeed, we are truly eager to see the major stockpilers and possessors to adhere to this Convention as much as they are. Nevertheless, we call upon those States in this group to act with courage and set the right example first, instead of waiting for change to happen.

Speaking about the challenges ahead, regarding Group I, indications that around 30 countries are acting for ratification are encouraging. The Convention community must continue encouraging them to ratify or accede to the Convention as soon as possible. Their ratifications helps continue the strong momentum in increasing the number of States Parties. The countries in the Group II must also be approached by us bilaterally or multilaterally in coming months. As per the Group III, despite their stance, we must strenuously do utmost to change their minds. As each state faces a specific and unique situation regarding their attitude toward the Convention, a tailor made approach to non statesparties are essential and effective.

Before I conclude my remarks. I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the supports Japan has received during its tenure as a coordinator on universalization from Portugal, former Presidents, a team of eleven States Parties, ICRC and CMC. As a State Party, Japan will continue to utilize every opportunity to promote the universalization of CCM.

Thank you.